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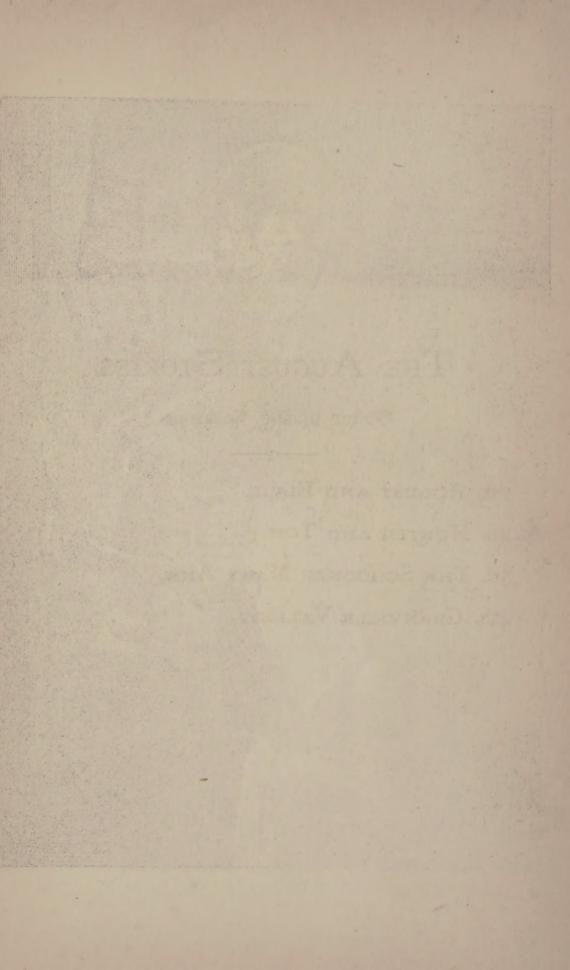
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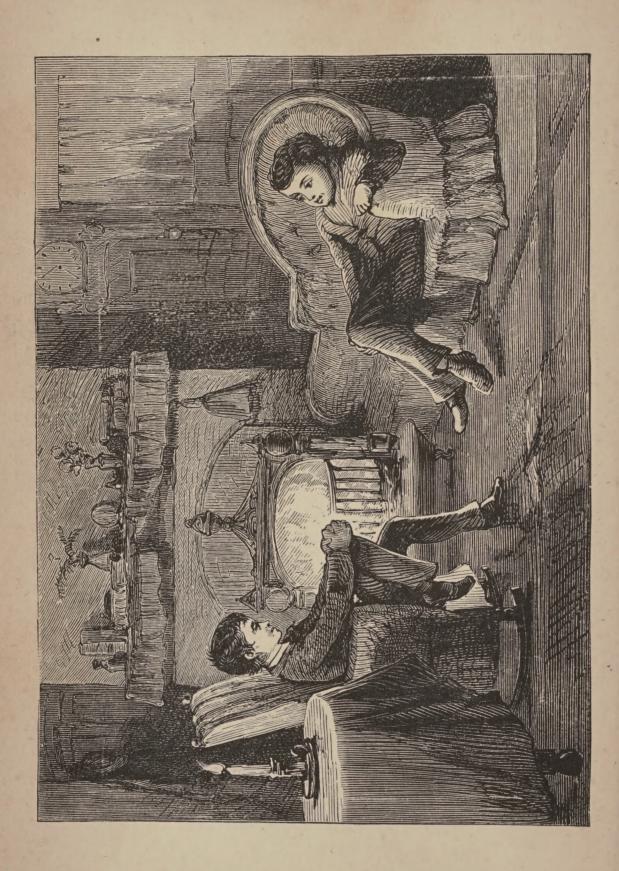
Ist. August and Elvie.

2d. HUNTER AND TOM.

3d. THE SCHOONER MARY ANN.

4th. GRANVILLE VALLEY.

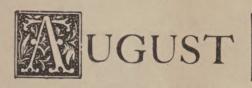




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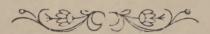


BY

JACOB ABBOTT.

YOLUME FOURTH.

Hnanville Halley.



NEW YORK:

DODD & MEAD, 762 BROADWAY.

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GRANVILLE VALLEY.

BY

JACOB ABBOTT,

AUTHOR OF THE "JUNO STORIES," "THE ROLLO BOOKS," ETC.

NEW YORK:

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GRANVILLE VALLEY.

CHAPTER I.

Plans Formed.

THE place which, in this book, is called Granville Valley is among the Green Mountains in Vermont, though it is not known there by that name. The way in which it happened that Elvie went with August to spend a large part of the winter there was as follows.

He had been in early life quite slender in form, and somewhat feeble in constitution, but he had improved so much in health and strength since he had been under August's care, and his

thinking and reasoning powers had been so far developed by August's management, and by the influence which he exerted over him in various ways, that his father began to think it was time for him to prepare for his going to school and commencing the regular study of books.

So he consulted the physician on the subject.

The physician after a careful examination of the case said that he should prefer to wait a few months longer before putting the boy to the regular routine of school duties, but if some arrangement could be made by which he could employ one or two hours each day in studying from books, and devote the rest of the time to outdoor exercise of some kind that was connected with amusement, he thought it would be a very safe and advantageous arrangement.

"The truth is," said he, "that six hours' confinement a day, which is the ordinary usage at school—with lessons too, perhaps, to learn in

the evening besides—is too much in my opinion for children, while they are growing, and their powers and faculties are consequently in the process of development and formation.

"I don't think," he added, "that they ought to study more than half that time, and not even so much as that, unless they are specially interested in the studies and like the work."

"Does that make much difference?" asked Mr. Grant.

"Oh yes," said the physician, "a great deal of difference. If children are interested in what they are doing, and pleased with the progress they make, the effort does not bring, by any means, so great a strain upon the brain and the nervous system, as when the work is irksome to them, and they are held to it by some sense of obligation."

"The children often become extremely interested in their school, I am told," said Mr. Grant,—"at least so some of my friends inform me—and yet this does not always prevent injury to their health. Indeed one of my friends found that his daughter was becoming pale and thin, and could not sleep well at night; and he attributed it to the extreme interest she felt in her lessons, and the solicitude and anxiety of mind it brought with it."

"Exactly," said the physician. "But that was probably not interest in the studies themselves, or pleasure in making progress in them, but solicitude about the marks or prizes to be earned, or ambition in respect to her standing in the class, or something of that kind. A girl may be urged to exert herself beyond her strength in performing irksome and injurious brain-work from fear of losing her place in her class, as well as from fear of any other kind of punishment or privation. And so she may be allured to go on in doing what she is too tired to

do with pleasure, and what is really injuring her, by hope of advancement or of a prize, just as she might be induced to continue such work by the promise of a ride or a new dress, or any other reward. All this is very different from interest in the studies themselves, and pleasure in the pursuit of them. So long as children are not urged on by extraneous inducements of any kind, but are governed simply by the interest they feel in what they are doing, and the pleasure they derive from the doing of it, we are pretty safe in allowing them to go on.

"I should think therefore," said the doctor in conclusion, "that it would be better for this winter if you could make some arrangement by which Elvie could go on with his studies for an hour or two every day, under some such guidance as that of this young August, who I understand from your account of him seems to

have the knack of interesting him in the work itself."

"Yes," said Mr. Grant. "The boy seems really to have that knack."

"It will be tolerably safe," said the doctor,

"for Elvie to do all that he really likes to do, on
its own account; and then perhaps next spring or
summer he can try going to school regularly,
and having some pressure of obligation put upon
him."

Mr. Grant asked the doctor, moreover, whether he would recommend his sending Elvie to a warmer climate during the winter, provided that he could make an arrangement for August to go with him. But the doctor replied that in some cases a warmer climate was desirable, but it was not necessary in Elvie's case. All that he required was plenty of air and outdoor exercise, plain and wholesome food, and agreeable mental occupation.

"He would like to go into Vermont or New Hampshire," said Mr. Grant. "He made an excursion in those regions during this last summer, and would like to go there again, especially in the winter, on account of the coasting and skating. And besides, he takes a special fancy to the mountains."

"There could not be a better place for him," said the doctor. "There are no more healthy countries in the world than New Hampshire and Vermont. And besides the ice and snow there would be a great deal to interest him in the winter occupations of the people on the grass farms of that region,—the care of the animals, the getting in of the winter wood—the sleigh rides, and singing schools, and other rural employments and pleasures."

So Mr. Grant at once decided that he would if possible make some arrangement to have Elvie spend the winter, after Christmas, among

the Green Mountains of Vermont, in case he could find a suitable place, and also make some arrangement with August to go and take care of him.

As to August Mr. Grant did not think of him simply in reference to Elvie's good. He wished also to make such arrangements as would be most conducive to August's good, and best adapted to promote his future welfare. Nor was he entirely unselfish in this; for he thought that so promising a boy would probably make a very excellent and successful man; and he hoped that by favoring August's progress in his education he could help him to attain to such a position in society that he and Elvie might be useful friends to each other in future.

Accordingly, one afternoon, at the close of business hours, Mr. Grant took an express train to Tarrytown, where his sister, Elvie's aunt Elphinstone, lived,—having previously

written to August to meet him at five o'clock at Mrs. Elphinstone's house. August was punctual to the minute, and there he and Mr. Grant had a conversation of half an hour on August's plans of life. August said that the employment that he would most like when he became a man would be that of an architect, or an engineer, or a constructor of machinery, or something of that kind that would give employment to his mechanical taste and predilections. August did not use these words it is true, in expressing his desire, but that was the idea. Mr. Grant said he thought it was a very judicious idea.

"And in order to lay a broad and deep foundation for success in those pursuits," said Mr. Grant, "the study that is most important for you to pursue is mathematics."

[&]quot;Mathematics!" repeated August.

[&]quot;Yes," said Mr. Grant. "Mathematics is the science of calculation. Now in all great works

of construction, such as laying out and making railroads, erecting public edifices, bridges and large establishments of all kinds, and manufacturing engines and machinery, there is one set of men that make the calculations and form the plans, and other sets who do the work by carrying and laying the stone, casting or forging the iron, and performing all the other mere mechanical labors, under the guidance and direction of the men who plan them.

"Now I suppose," continued Mr. Grant,

"that you wish to qualify yourself to plan and
direct such works, and not merely to aid in
executing them under the direction of others."

August said that would be his wish, if he thought he could ever fit himself to do it.

"You can fit yourself no doubt," said Mr. Grant, "and one of the first things to be done is to study mathematics. In planning all great constructions there is a vast amount of calcula-

often depends entirely upon the accuracy of the calculations. Now mathematics is the science of calculation. Arithmetic is the calculation of numbers, Geometry that of forms, and Algebra that of quantities. Those are the three foundation stones on which the power and the success of all great engineers and constructors repose."

As Mr. Grant said this August felt a strong desire to engage at once in the vigorous prosecution of those studies, but he was silent, not wishing to interrupt Mr. Grant in the communication that he was making to him.

So Mr. Grant went on to explain to August that he was desirous of sending Elvie, after the Christmas holidays, to some place in New England where he could live upon a farm and have a great deal of out-of-door amusement and occupation in connection with the farm, and yet spend an hour or two every day in some

kind of study or mental improvement; and that he had conceived the idea of finding a place for him near some academy or other school, where August could attend to his studies regularly.

August said that he should like such a plan very much.

"Well if you would like it," said Mr. Grant, "that is one point gained. You must ask your father and we will see what he says about it. If your father approves the plan in general, then I will make some inquiries with a view to ascertaining whether any place can be found which combines the advantages that we require—that is whether we can find a farm which will be the right place for Elvie, and is also near enough to some institution of learning which will afford you the advantages that you will require. You can propose the plan to your father, and if he is inclined to approve it then I will make some inquiries in New York, and if I succeed in

finding a place I will write to you making a definite proposal."

August was much pleased with the prospect which this conversation opened before him, and said that he would consult his father that very evening.

"And you can write to me what he says by to-morrow's mail," said Mr. Grant.

So saying he bade August good-bye, and after taking tea with his sister, Mrs. Elphinstone, he returned that same evening to New York.





CHAPTER II.

Instructions.

THE plan formed by Mr. Grant in the manner described in the last chapter was successfully carried into effect. August's father was well pleased with the arrangement so far as his son was concerned, and August himself was more than pleased with it. It opened to him an opportunity, such as he had long desired, of commencing a course of study somewhat in earnest; and then moreover he had become quite attached to Elvie, and the idea of spending the winter and spring with him in some valley among the Green Mountains where there was an academy near, in which he could have instruction in

mathematics, formed for him a very attractive picture.

Some of the boys who may read this story will perhaps be curious to know how Mr. Grant went to work to find a place in Vermont or New Hampshire fulfilling these conditions. He thought at once that the best means of obtaining the requisite information would be through some of the Vermont or New Hampshire merchants who might come to New York to purchase goods. Now no such country merchants came to him, for he was an importer, and the business of an importer is to bring in goods from Europe in large quantities—sometimes by the cargo—and to sell them chiefly to the wholesale dealers in New York who keep an assortment of the different kinds, and supply the country merchants as they are required. These wholesale dealers are called jobbers, though it would seem that they might find a more elegant name for them.

Now Mr. Grant went to one of these men who he knew did a great deal of business with New England and asked him if he had many customers from Vermont.

"Yes, plenty of them," said his friend. "There are some of them in here almost every day."

So Mr. Grant asked the merchant if he would have the goodness, the next time one of his customers came in who seemed to be a man of intelligence and general information, and who was also an upright and trustworthy man, to send word to him at his store—that is Mr. Grant's store,—and also to ask the gentleman if he could spare the time to wait a few minutes until Mr. Grant should have time to come and see him.

In consequence of this arrangement Mr. Grant received a message the next day that there was a Vermont gentleman at his friend's store waiting to see him. He went there immediately, and

obtained from the stranger a good deal of valuable information in regard to the subject of his inquiries.

In a similar way he made the acquaintance of two or three other men from different parts of the mountain country in New England, and thus obtained all the information necessary to enable him to come to a decision. He finally decided upon the region of Granville where there was a small village with an academy in it —the teacher of which he learned was very much liked by the scholars—and near it a green and fertile valley where there were many pleasant and thriving farms, carried on by prosperous farmers. He came finally to the conclusion that if on visiting the place August should find that the academy was such an institution as would answer his purposes, and if he could also find a farm up the valley where Elvie would be contented and happy, and if he could moreover

make some arrangement by which he could secure the employment of Elvie in some kind of study for an hour or two every day, without interfering with his own duties at the academy, it would be all right.

Mr. Grant learned only two things about the academy at Granville. One was that more attention was paid in it to mathematical and scientific than to classical studies, which was just what he desired. There is a difference in different institutions in this respect, owing partly to the taste and inclination of the teachers respectively, and partly to the prevailing wish or intended destination of the class of pupils resorting to the different institutions. This is all very well, as in consequence of this diversity the parents or each pupil can choose for their son the school that is best adapted to the particular plans of life which they have formed for him.

Thus the fact that at the Granville academy

the studies most directly connected with the practical affairs of life were prominent, seemed to adapt it very well to August's plans.

The other thing that Mr. Grant learned about the school, was that the boys attending it liked their teacher very much indeed: and he thought that the fact of the scholars liking their teacher, and liking the school, was very good presumptive proof that the teacher was a good teacher, and the school a good school. Indeed the proof would seem to be not merely presumptive, but pretty positive; for inasmuch as there can be no possible way by which a teacher can make his scholars like the school except by giving them pleasant employment when they are in it; and as there is no conceivable way of finding pleasant employment for forty or fifty boys shut up and kept still day after day in a school-room except by employing them in the successful prosecution of some kind of study, the fact that a teacher

makes his scholars like their school is pretty good proof that the school is a good one.

Mr. Grant therefore decided to send the boys, in the first instance at least, to Granville. He accordingly gave August instructions to that effect. He provided him with a sufficient supply of money, and with two letters of introduction One of these letters was written by his ministe. and was addressed to the minister of Granville. The other was from the president of a well known bank, and was addressed to the principal merchant in the village. They both expressed of course the highest opinion of Mr. Grant, in respect not only to his pecuniary responsibility, but to his entire trustworthiness both as a business man and a christian.

Mr. Grant also gave August very definite and precise instructions as to his course of procedure. These instructions were written out in full and were substantially as follows.

That August was to proceed by the Connecticut River Railroad, and by stage, directly to Granville. There he was to put up at the best tavern in the village until he could make the necessary inquiries and arrangements. As soon as convenient after his arrival he was to deliver his two letters—one to the minister and the other to the merchant—and to ask each of them their opinion in respect to the advantages of the academy for affording to August the practical, scientific instruction which he desired. If their opinion on this point was favorable, then he was to ask them for the names of any farmers living within a mile or two of the academy, at whose houses he and Elvie could probably find a pleasant home as boarders. He was to obtain the lists of these farmers, and gather in respect to them all the information which the merchant or the minister could give, and afterward, in consultation with Elvie, compare their reports. Then, as soon afterward as convenient, he was to take some kind of carriage from the tavern and go and call upon those farmers, or such of them as he and Elvie should judge from the reports which they had received it was most desirable for them to see, and select from among the places the one which they should find best adapted to their purpose.

Mr. Grant also instructed August to pay to Elvie twenty-five cents every week as his allowance of spending money,—this said allowance to be entirely at Elvie's discretion to be spent as he should wish, without any exception; but subject however to this condition, namely, that if Elvie should buy anything with his money which in August's judgment was likely to be hurtful, dangerous or annoying, either to himself or to others, he was to be bound to give it up to August, on August's reimbursing him for the amount that he had paid for it, and

August was carefully to preserve whatever he should thus reclaim, to take with him to New York to Mr. Grant at the time of their return in the spring.

And further, that while August was to be restricted to twenty-five cents per week in respect to the amount that he was to pay to Elvie for spending money, he was himself to be under no restriction at all in respect to the amount that he might expend for him in anything that he should judge important to promote h's health or comfort, or his progress in study.

"Of course," said Mr. Grant, in these instructions,—"I do not wish any money to be wasted, or to be expended foolishly—but anything whatever that you think it desirable to buy for him, or any arrangement of any kind that you deem it advisable to make, that will conduce to his substantial comfort—you can make freely, whatever the expense may be."

It was also a part of the instructions thus given to August, that he was to mail regularly every Saturday night a letter to Mr. Grant giving him a distinct though brief report of the progress made since the last letter, and of the situation of affairs at the time of writing, and to telegraph immediately if either he himself or Elvie should meet with any serious accident, or be seriously sick.

Mr. Grant, when he handed August these his instructions, put into his hands fifteen ten-dollar bills, and directed him to keep a full account of all his expenditure and to send the account to him at the end-of every month.

"I shall see," said Mr. Grant, "by the balance you have in hand at each report you make, when I must send you more money."

Provided with these instructions and this supply of funds, and also with two trunks—one for each of them—containing what was necessary

in the way of clothing and other such things, not forgetting two pairs of excellent skates,—the two boys set out on their journey one bitter cold morning in January.





CHAPTER III.

The Fourney.

"I am glad it is so cold," said Elvie.
"Why?" asked August.

"Because the ice will be all the harder and stronger on the ponds or rivers where we are going," said Elvie.

"It is rather tough for us however—on the journey," said August.

"Oh, that's no matter," said Elvie. "We shall be warm enough in the cars. They always have stoves in the cars."

"That's right," replied August. "I am glad to see that you are disposed to look on the bright side. There is a bright side to almost everything, it we only have sense enough to see

it. Some boys would have been fretting and grumbling about the cold on such a morning as this, instead of thinking of the good which it might be the means of bringing us."

"But do you suppose there are any ponds or rivers where we are going?" asked Elvie.

"I don't suppose there can be any large rivers there," said August, "and I do not know that there are any natural ponds,—but I feel pretty sure there must be some mill ponds."

"What makes you think so?" asked Elvie.

"Because it is a valley, and it is a valley of some consequence, and of course there is a stream running through it."

"Of course?" repeated Elvie.

"Almost of course," said August—"for all the rain which falls in a valley must flow down into the bed of it,—either by soaking down through the ground, or by forming little streamlets and brooks over the surface; and so boundary—between New Hampshire and Vermont, this road took them directly into the region of country where they wished to go.

As has already been said, Elvie could see very little of the scenery of the country through which they were passing. Nor would there have been much to see if the view had been open to him, for the trees were bare, the ground was covered with snow—and even the river, except in places where the flow of the water was very rapid, had the appearance of a succession of level fields as white and solid as the adjoining land.

Elvie obtained a glimpse of the landscape now and then as the train passed along, by rubbing off the frost in a little spot upon the pane opposite to his eye; but the clear spot soon became clouded over again, and the view was very unsatisfactory while it continued, for the river could scarcely be distinguished from the level fields that bounded it.

there being dams and mill ponds here and there along the course of them. Some of these streams show a constant succession of dams and ponds through the whole extent of the valley."

The boys met with the usual variety of incidents and adventures on their journey. The car in which they took seats was made very comfortable by a good stove, but they could see very little of the scenery of the country through which they passed on account of the frost on the windows; which was caused by the action of the cold without, in chilling the glass, and the dampness, chiefly resulting from the breath of the passengers, within. For wherever there is warm air that contains a great deal of moisture within any room or enclosed space, and that comes in contact with glass that is made very cold by wintry air on the outside, the moisture is condensed upon it in the form of frost. In

summer, when the outside air is not so cold, the moisture which is condensed in this way, takes the form of dew.

A dew upon a glass is composed of liquid water in very fine drops. Frost on the windows, on the other hand, is *frozen* water, that is ice, which however exists in the form of very minute crystals.

The train which the boys took in leaving New York was an express train. It was on the New Haven Railroad that the journey was commenced. From New Haven their course led them to Hartford and Springfield, and so far they were on the main express line to Boston. At Springfield, however, they left this line and took what is called the Connecticut Valley Railroad, which ascends along the bank of the Connecticut river for a long distance; and as the river Connecticut in the upper part of its course flows along the boundary—or rather forms the

must in the end produce a stream to flow along whole length of the valley at the bottom. This stream is larger or smaller according to the extent of the surface which gathers the rain. Now I suppose that Granville valley is of considerable extent, and of course it must produce a considerable stream."

"But there may not be any mill ponds on the stream," said Elvie.

"It is tolerably certain that there will be," said August, "for the New England people are pretty apt to set all such streams at work. And the only way that they can set them at work is to dam them up here and there to form ponds, and then draw off the water as they want it to drive their mills and machinery.

"Of course I am not certain that it will be so in the Granville valley," continued August, "but there are very few valleys in New England with a stream of water flowing through them without At length late in the afternoon they arrived at the station where they were to leave the railroad and take the stage which was to convey them to Granville, in the interior. On stepping out upon the platform the first thing was to secure their trunks, and then to inquire for the Granville stage.

"Here it is," said the man of whom they asked the question.

The man whom they asked was enveloped in a shaggy great coat which was made of a buffalo skin. He had also a fur cap on his head and a whip in his hand. The stage which he pointed to was a covered sleigh.

"Good!" said Elvie. "Now we are going to have a sleigh ride."

"Shall we take it to-night or wait till tomorrow?" asked August.

August had learned that the stage would go on that night, and that it was about three hours' ride to Granville. So he told Elvie that they could go on that night or remain in the village where they were, at some hotel or tavern, and finish their journey the next day. But Elvie was impatient to see what sort of a place Granville was and accordingly desired to go on.

"At any rate," said August, "we must get into the stage to go to the hotel here. I suppose the driver will stop a few minutes at the hotel to take in his other passengers."

In the mean time the driver had obtained the two trunks—for the boys had given him the checks when he pointed out the stage to them—and was now strapping them upon the rack behind. The sides of the stage consisted of curtains formed of some heavy blanket-like stuff, with button-holes in tags of leather at the corners and along the sides, by means of which the curtains could be buttoned down to the border of the sleigh.

These curtains were already buttoned down upon one side, but they were open upon the other, and August and Elvie climbed in. The sleigh was quite large,—having three seats extending across it from side to side, and the bottom of it, up to the level of the seats, was filled with fresh clean straw. The seats themselves were covered with buffalo robes, as they are called—that is buffalo skins with the hair on, and the leather soft and pliant. Besides those that were spread upon the seats, there were several loose robes lying upon the straw, which were to be used to envelope the feet, and cover the knees of the passengers.

August and Elvie clambered over to the back seat and established themselves there, burying their feet in the straw, and spreading one of the loose buffalo robes over their laps—taking care to tuck it in well at the sides.

"There!" said Elvie speaking in a tone of

great satisfaction. "We are as snug as mice in a nest!"

"Snugger, in fact," he added, "for the mice don't have any fur blankets like these to cover themselves up with."

"Yes," rejoined August, "they have fur robes growing right out of their bodies. That's somewhat better than our plan, for they have them always handy; and then besides there is no danger of the little mice getting their bed clothes off at night."

While Elvie was musing over the question whether or not it would be really better for him to have a natural fur covering upon his body and limbs, the driver mounted upon the box outside and the horses set off on a brisk trot away from the station and into the village.

The sun was just setting when the stage drove up to the hotel door. The driver jumped down from his seat and called out at the door of

the hotel "Stage is ready!" August asked Elvie if he would not prefer stopping at the hotel that night, and so go on the next morning.

"You see," said he, "it will soon be dark now —only there will be a moon. But it will be very cold."

"No," said Elvie, "let's go on now we are so comfortably settled. Besides I should like a sleigh ride by moonlight."

"It is pretty cold to-night, isn't it, driver?" said August addressing the driver.

"A little chilly," said the driver; "but it is still. We never call it cold when it is still."

A Vermont driver, so long as it is still, does not call anything cold that is less than thirty below zero. If there is a fierce wind blowing in his face that makes it a different thing.

In a few minutes two men came out from the hotel and entering the stage took their places upon the forward seat. They were talking with each other all the time, and when they were seated they drew the buffalo robe over their laps in an unconcerned manner, as if they did not think at all of the cold.

They had not far to go, however, for at the first stopping place of the stage, which was about four miles from where it started, they got out; so that for the rest of the journey the two boys had the whole interior of the vehicle to themselves.

As the driver unbuttoned the curtain on one side to open the way for his two passengers to get out, the moonlight came in. It came in on the opposite side of the stage to that on which the beams of the sun had shone at its setting. This was a matter of course, for the moon, to be full, must be where we can see the whole or nearly the whole of the side which is made bright by the sun's shining upon it,—that is, it must

be opposite to the sun in the sky, and consequently must be rising or near its rising in the east when the sun is going down, or has just gone down, in the west. When Elvie saw these beams he proposed to August that they should have the curtain rolled up, so as to let the moon shine in.

"We can try it," said August, "and see whether it will be too cold."

So while the driver was attending to his horses, August rolled up the curtain, and fastened it with two straps provided for the purpose.

Very soon after this the driver mounted upon his seat, and the horses trotted on.

They went very fast, for the road was in excellent condition, the load was light, and the horses had been provided with a fresh supply of motive power, as August expressed it, in shape of a good supper of oats and hay which

they had taken in before they started, at the stable of the hotel.

Thus everything being favorable, and the night air being fresh, and the horses being in excellent spirits, the driver thought that it was a good time, as he expressed it to himself, to "put them through."

Accordingly the horses went on at great speed up hill and down dale without any slackening of their pace, as if they liked very much the idea of being "put through!" The road was wide, and was worn so smooth and made so hard by the multitude of sleds and sleighs which had passed over it, that it was almost like a road of ice. The moon shone in, beautiful though cold, upon the straw and the buffalo robes in the interior of the stage. The forest trees, as they seemed to glide swiftly by, shewed their branches, and sometimes their tops where the tops were visible, bent down by the load or snow which

had lodged upon them—and the coat collars and mufflers of August and Elvie were soon whitened with the frost work produced by the condensation of their breaths. They were so wrapped up however with the garments which they had provided for the occasion, and their feet and hands were so enveloped in the straw and covered with buffalo robes, that they were as warm as if they had been in bed.

"It must be a pretty cold night," said Elvie.

"I pity the poor people that have to work out all day such weather as this."

"You had better pity the rich people that stay at home and have comfortable fires," replied August.

"Why so?" asked Elvie.

"Because there is usually more fretting and grumbling about the cold, ten times over," said August, "among people who live in comfortable houses, and have nothing to do but take care of themselves, than there is among those who have to go out and face it."

"Then it is because they are fretful and impatient," said Elvie—"and so it is their own fault, and they don't deserve to be pitied."

"They are all the more to be pitied on that account," said August.

"More to be pitied!" repeated Elvie. He seemed somewhat surprised to hear of the possession of a fretful and impatient spirit making a person an object of pity rather than of blame.

"Yes," replied August. "I think they are to be pitied, for the cause of it must have been either something in their natural disposition, or else something in the way they have been brought up—or else partly from one and partly from the other. And in whichever way it comes, it is a great misfortune."

August and Elvie however being in a contented frame of mind, and not disposed to find any complaint at any unavoidable privations and hardships, but rather to think of and enjoy what there was that was enjoyable within their reach, found their night ride a very comfortable and even pleasant one, and at about eight o'clock in the evening the stage that was conveying them drove up rapidly to the door of the tavern in Granville.





CHAPTER IV.

The Arrival.

ON stepping out from the stage the boys were conducted into the sitting-room of the tavern, where they found a great blazing wood fire ready to welcome them. Their trunks were taken off from the rack behind the stage and put into the entry. After they had warmed themselves a little they went out into what was called the "bar-room," to enter their names in the book, and engage rooms for the night.

They found in the bar-room a small space partitioned off by a kind of counter, in the corner, and upon the counter there was lying open a large book, which seemed to be full of

names. This book was the register in which travellers were to enter their names on their arrival. There was an inkstand with a pen in it by the side of the book. August took the pen and entered his own and Elvie's names in the book, and then asked a young man who stood behind the counter, if they could have two rooms opening into each other, and a fire in one of them.

"Exactly," replied the young man. "There is a nice open stove, and a fire all ready to be lighted."

So saying he went out into the entry to take the trunks into the rooms. August and Elvie followed him. He took up one of the trunks and throwing it upon his shoulder he led the way up stairs. He went first into the largest of the two rooms, and there after setting the lamp upon the table he said he would light the fire and then would bring up the other trunk.

"No," said Elvie, "let me light the fire."

"Very well," said the young man—"there are some lamp-lighters on the mantel-piece."

The stove was a large iron one, open in front like a fire-place,—only there were doors by which the opening might be closed.

So Elvie took a lamp-lighter from the mantelpiece, touched the end of it to the lamp which the young man held in his hand, and then with it lighted the kindling materials that had been placed under the fire. He stood a moment to watch the smoke and flame making their way up through the wood.

"As soon as you see that it is going to burn," said the young man, "you can shut the stove doors, and then the room will be all warm for you by the time you have had your suppers;— and I will go down and bring up the other trunk."

Accordingly as soon as Elvie found that the

fire was making its way freely up through the wood, he shut the doors of the stove, and he and August went down-stairs to supper, meeting the young man on the way bringing up the other trunk.

The supper table was set in a back room where a great wood fire was burning, which, together with two or three lamps that were burning on the table, gave a very cheerful and even brilliant aspect to the scene.

There was quite a little party at the supper table, consisting of persons who boarded at the hotel, and one or two travelers besides August and Elvie. The table was most abundantly supplied with beef-steaks, fried chicken, baked and fried potatoes, and also with mince and apple, and pumpkin pies, and plates of cakes and doughnuts. Elvie, as he entered the room, was delighted to see this display, for the long ride had given him an excellent appetite. The other

people came into the room at the same time that he and August entered it, for the bell had just been rung.

The warmth of the room too was very agreeable to the two travelers in coming from the wintry night air; though they had been so well enveloped in straw and in buffalo robes in the sleigh that they had not suffered at all from the cold during their ride. Now that they had come in, however, the fire was very agreeable, and one of the girls that attended at the table gave them seats pretty near it.

After supper they both went up to their rooms again. They found the large room quite comfortably warm from the fire in the stove, and all the "chill was taken off," as August expressed it, from the smaller room.

Elvie, however, at once put some more wood upon the fire in the stove, taking it from an amply filled wood box, near.

"And now," said August, "I hope you don't feel sleepy."

"No," said Elvie, "not a bit."

"Because," continued August, "it will be better for us to sit up an hour or so, after eating such a hearty supper."

So saying August with Elvie's help moved out a large table into the middle of the room, and then the two boys opening their trunks took out books and portfolios and writing materials, and arranging these upon the table they soon gave the place a very sociable and attractive look. August recommended that Elvie should take out a sheet of note paper and begin a letter to his father. Elvie said he did not feel like writing a letter that night. He would rather do it the next day, he said.

"But I don't ask you to write it to-night," said August, "but only to get everything ready and just begin it. It is very little work to take

Father, and perhaps an opening sentence, and also to stamp and address an envelope; and when you have done that you will feel that the work is half done. The work of actually writing the letter to-morrow morning, after all these preparations are made, will seem very light.

Elvie concluded to follow August's advice, as he thought it would not be much trouble to take out his paper, and get ready to write, and also to prepare an envelope; but he found when he had done so much, and had written one sentence, he was inclined to go on, and after a silence of about fifteen minutes he laid down his pen, and said in a tone of great satisfaction:

"There! My letter is finished."

"I am very glad of it," said August. "I was in hopes that when you had once made a beginning you would go on and finish it,—though if you had not done so, your having

made a beginning would have been a great help for you to-morrow. The best thing we can do when we have a work before us that we have not energy enough to resolve to do, is to resolve to begin it, at any rate. Then when we have once made a beginning it is easier to go on with it than we supposed. It is a way of inveigling ourselves to doing our duty."

"Inveigling?" repeated Elvie.

"Yes," said August; "enticing ourselves—drawing ourselves along artfully."

"I am glad my letter is done at any rate," said Elvie. "I have told my father that we have got here safely, and how pleasant it is."

So saying Elvie handed August the letter to read, and August added a postscript to it.

"Your father will be very glad," said August,
"that you had the resolution to sit down at
once and write him a letter so soon after your
arrival. I'll go down with the letter and see if

there is any way by which I can mail it tonight,—so that it will go out to-morrow morning, and thus perhaps meet the first down train to-morrow."

August found that he had to go across the street to the post-office, to deposit his letter in the post-office box, in order to insure its going by the morning mail. When he returned he found Elvie sitting in a comfortable rocking chair by the fireside, looking into the fire. There was a sofa there too, and August, drawing it up a little nearer to the fire, established himself upon it in a very comfortable manner.*

"And now to-morrow," said August, "we must go to work to make our inquiries, and to form our plans."

"And what plans are you going to form for my studies?" asked Elvie.

^{*} Frontispiece.

"That's what puzzles me," replied August.

"How does it puzzle you?" asked Elvie.

"Why you see the difficulty is this," said August. "Your father wished to have me go on with my studies regularly at the academy, and for you to study about two hours every day. Now I cannot go on very well and keep up with my classes unless I am at school during the whole of school hours, even if the teacher should be willing that I should be absent a part of the time. And I don't think you could do anything to advantage in going to any kind of a school for two hours in a day, even if you could be admitted to any school on those conditions. The difficulty is to find what time I am going to have to attend to you."

"Could not I have my studies in the evening?" suggested Elvie.

"I don't think that plan would work very well," said August. "The evening is not a good time

for young persons to study, especially if their constitutions are not well established. You will get tired, or at least I hope you will get tired, every day before night comes, with driving about the farm, if we find one, or with sliding and skating, or other exercise."

"Then how would it do," asked Elvie, "for me to get up early in the morning for my study?"

"I don't think that would do very well either," said August. "A boy when he is growing needs his full sleep. And besides I don't believe that we could have any good conveniences for study early in the morning, at any farmer's house such as we shall be likely to find up the valley."

"Then what shall we do?" asked Elvie.

"I don't readily see," replied August. "I shall have to think a little. But we will not puzzle our heads any more about it to-night,

but will go to bed. You shall have this room, and I will take the little one adjoining."

So saying, August rose from his seat, and he and Elvie began to make preparations for going to bed. August put a large rock-maple log upon the fire, and then shut the stove-doors, so that the log should be kept slowly burning all night. He then went into the small adjoining room himself, leaving the larger one, where the fire was, to Elvie. When Elvie was in bed he came in again, and tucked him up very snugly. Elvie said he was in a warmer and better nest than he had in the stage.

August soon afterward put out the lamp, and then Elvie's attention was attracted to a flickering of light upon the wall, produced by the radiation from the flames in the stove passing out through the crevices over the stove-doors. He watched this flickering and the glow which accompanied it for a few minutes, and then said

his prayers with a heart full of devout thankfulness to God for all His goodness to him. After this, and before he even knew that he was sleepy, he was fast asleep.





CHAPTER V.

deedy ine was fast

Fohnny.

THE next morning it was bright and pleasant.

Sleigh bells were jingling merrily in the street, and the snow in the fields around glittered with millions of spangles. The smoke from the chimneys, or rather the columns of steam,—for most of what rises from the chimney in cold winter mornings, in country villages, is steam,—rose straight into the air.

"The first thing we have to do to-day," said August, as he and Elvie were seated at the breakfast table, "is to deliver our two letters of introduction, and see what we can find out about a place for us to board, up the valley."

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"We have brought two letters of introduction," he continued. "One is for a merchant, and one is for a minister. We will go to the minister's first."

Elvie readily agreed to this arrangement, and as the merchant's and the minister's houses were both probably in the village, they determined to go to them on foot, and then afterward, if they heard of any good place for them among the farmers up the valley, they would take a horse and sleigh and go on an exploring tour.

"But how shall we find out where the minister lives?" asked August.

"Oh, anybody can tell us that," said Elvie.

"Anybody will know where the minister lives.

I'll go and ask at the bar."

It was one of August's plans in his management of Elvie to refer to him as often as possible in disposing of the various questions which were continually arising, and to devolve upon him the duty of doing everything which he supposed Elvie would like to do. He considered this a very important means of cultivating the thinking and reasoning powers, and maturing the judgment of such a boy.

"If I wish to teach him to take care of himself," he used to say, "I must give him some practice in such duties, and not do every thing for him."

Elvie went off at once to procure the desired information. In a few minutes he returned saying, "I have found out. I'll show you the way."

So August put himself under Elvie's guidance, and the two boys, after making the necessary preparations, set off together. August made no inquiries of Elvie, but walked along by his side as if he placed entire confidence in his capability to act as guide. They walked for some distance along a brick side-walk which formed the margin

of the village street. There were shops and stores on each side, and Elvie pointed to a sign over one of the stores which contained the name of the merchant to whom one of the letters of introduction was addressed.

"We will go there," he said, "after we have been at the minister's."

Presently they came to a church which stood on a corner near the middle of the village.

"This is the church," said Elvie, "where the minister preaches. His house is up this way."

August followed without asking any question, in the direction which Elvie indicated, and presently came to a small one-story but very neat and pretty-looking house, on the right hand, with steps leading from the side-walk up to a yard in front of the house. There were some evergreen trees around the margin of the yard.

"This must be the house," said Elvie. "He said that it was the first house on the right, and

that there was a yard and some evergreens in front."

Elvie led the way up the steps and opened a little gate at the top of them which admitted them into the yard. As they entered the yard Elvie's eyes fell upon a small boy—perhaps three or four years old—who was coming up a sliding place which he had made, or which had been made for him by his father, down a little descent before the door. He came up dragging after him a broken sled. The sled was very small, being just of the right size for such a boy, and was formed in a rude manner by means of narrow boards made into the shape of runners, and a board for a seat nailed across from one runner to the other. But the nails, it seems, had not been large enough, for the boy in sliding down had somehow or other allowed his sled to "slue" as the boys say, and one of the runners had given way under the strain which had been

brought upon it, and had been torn off from its fastenings. The poor boy seemed to have borne the misfortune as patiently as could have been expected, for he did not cry, but was staggering up the hill as well as he could, bringing the broken runner under his arm and dragging the remaining portion of the sled after him by means of its string.

August and Elvie stopped a moment to look at him, August holding the letter of introduction in his hand. The boy gazed intently at the strangers too as he advanced toward the step of the door. Although it had been so cold the night before, the sun was now shining—making it quite warm and pleasant at the door, and the door itself was open. The boy, as soon as he came near the step, called out to his mother.

"Well, Johnny," answered a pleasant voice from within, "what is it?"

"My sled is all brokened," said Johnny, "and here are two big boys with a letter." On hearing this Johnny's mother came at once to the door. Seeing August and Elvie, she at once asked them to come in. She told Johnny that he had better come in too, as his sled was broken.

"But I want it mended," said Johnny.

"I'll help you mend it," said August.

"Are you a sled-mender?" asked Johnny looking up curiously into August's face.

"Yes," said August. "I've mended a good many sleds in my day."

So saying August gave Johnny his hand, and they all went into the house. Johnny pulled his sled in after him, holding the broken runner all the time under his arm.

As soon as they had entered the house, August handed the letter to the lady, who, as it proved, was the minister's wife. The letter, as usual with letters of introduction, was not sealed, and the lady opened and read it. Then she looked

at August and Elvie with a pleased expression of countenance, as if the contents of the letter had been such as to make a favorable impression in respect to them. She told them that Mr. Rosler, her husband, had gone to the post-office, but that he would be at home in a few minutes, and asked them to sit by the fire and wait.

Mrs. Rosler then returned to a table at the back side of the room, where she had been ironing when the boys came to the door, and resumed her work,—continuing her conversation, in the meantime, with August.

Elvie took Johnny to the other side of the fire, and began to examine the broken sled.

- "Is your name Johnny?" said he.
- "Yes," said Johnny.
- "My name is something like that," said Elvie.

 "They call me Elvie, and don't you think that sounds something like Johnny."
 - "I don't know," said Johnny.

Elvie looked at the sled, and was mechanic enough to see that all that was required was some larger and stouter nails. The wood of the runner was not split; the difficulty was that the nails had been broken off and pulled out. It seems that Johnny's father, who had made the sled for his boy, not having any gimlet at hand to bore with, and being afraid that if he put in large nails without boring there would be danger of splitting the wood, used small nails instead, and they proved insufficient.

"If you can go out and get me a hammer and some big nails," said Elvie, "I can mend your sled for you."

"Well," said Johnny in a tone of great satisfaction.

And so saying he went out into the kitchen, or rather into the back kitchen,—for in the simple and unpretending style of living which many country ministers are obliged to adopt, one room often has to serve, especially in cold weather, for parlor, sitting-room and kitchen all in one. In this case, in fact, Mrs. Rosler was doing her ironing in the family sitting-room.

It must not be supposed, however, that the family life in these homes is any the less happy on account of these snug modes of living. On the contrary such homes are often the most happy; and many people have found that by enlarging their house and their accommodations in the hope of increasing their happiness, they have in fact only multiplied their troubles and cares.

Johnny soon came back lugging in a box which contained a hammer and some tools.

"Why, Johnny!" said his mother turning round from her ironing. "What are you doing?"

"He is only bringing in some nails for me to mend his sled with," said Elvie.

Mrs. Rosler looked at him a moment with an

air of pleased curiosity, and then said, "You must not be troublesome, Johnny."

"No, mother," replied Johnny. "I'm not troublesome. He wants to mend my sled."

Elvie selected some large nails, of the kind called board nails, to replace the small and weak shingle nails which had been used before. Then he took out of his pocket a little tool-handle full of tools, which he often carried with him on his journeys, so as to have the tools ready at hand to do any little job of mechanical work which he might have occasion to undertake, either for himself or for others—and especially for others. For he had learned, partly from the influence and instructions of August, and partly from his own experience and observation, that the true object or line is to do to others, as well as to ourselves, all the good in our power, and he found many occasions in which he could do somebody a favor by having his tools with him.

These tools were enclosed in a little handle, the top of which could be unscrewed so as to take the tools out. They consisted of bradawls of different sizes, a small screw-driver, two or three pretty little chisels, a small gouge, saw, file and the like. There were twenty or more of these tools in all, including a little wrench, by means of which any one of them could be fastened into the socket at the end of the handle for use, and released again, when the tools were to be put away. Such a set of tools as this can be bought at almost any hardware store, and probably most of the readers of this book have seen the article.

There was a double advantage in the possession of a pocket companion like this in such a case as that of Johnny's, for it not only enables a good-natured and kind-hearted boy like Elvie to mend what is broken, but it also greatly interests and amuses the child to see the handle and the tools, and to watch the operation.

Johnny stood with his hands behind him,—for Elvie had expressly enjoined it upon him "not to touch"—and looked on with intense curiosity and interest depicted in his countenance, while Elvie unscrewed the top of the handle, and then poured out all the tools into his open hand.

He then took out a bradawl of the proper size, and the little wrench, and gave them to Johnny to hold while he put back the rest of the tools into the interior of the handle. Then he bored the holes for the nails—four in each side —for he wished to strengthen the side that was still whole, as well as to mend the one that was broken. After he had bored the holes he selected nails for them and inserted the nails, as far as they would go, into the holes.

"And now," said he after having done this,
"we will go out on the mont step and drive the
nails in."

"No," said Johnny. "I want you to drive them in here, where it is warm." "Ah! but," said Elvie, "if I'm going to mend your sled you must let me do it in my own way."

He seemed to think that this was a good opportunity to give Johnny a lesson in submission to the will of his superiors. At any rate, without paying any heed to his desire to have the driving in of the nails done in the house, which he knew would disturb his mother and August who were talking there, he took up the sled, and giving Johnny the hammer to carry. partly for the purpose of diverting his thoughts from the refusal of his request to have the mending of the sled finished at the fireside they went together out to the great stone step, before the door, where Elvie drove in the nails, and the sled was then stronger and better than ever.

After two or three slides with the sled, Elvie and Johnny went back into the house, and very

soon afterward Mr. Rosler came home. After reading the letter of introduction, he gave August and Elvie a very cordial reception, and seemed to take a great interest in their plans. He made many inquiries, and consulted his wife several times about the principal farmers up the valley. On the whole he recommended a certain farmer whom he called Deacon Justin. His place he thought would be on the whole the best for them, provided Mrs. Justin had a room for them that she could spare.

"He'll have a kind of companion and playmate there in Quimbo," said Mr. Rosler.

"Yes," said Mrs. Rosler, "only there is very little play in Quimbo.',

"Well, there's Fan. There's play enough in Fan," rejoined Mr. Rosler.

Elvie's curiosity was much excited by these allusions to Quimbo and Fan, but he had no time to make any inquiries, for August had risen to take his leave. Mr. Rosler gave them both a very cordial invitation to come and see him again, and especially to call upon him if they found that he could in any way be of any farther assistance to them in their plans. Mrs. Rosler joined in this invitation, while Johnny stood by and looking up wistfully into Elvie's face, said earnestly, "Don't go away."

After leaving the minister's the two boys went to the merchant's where they were also very cordially received. The merchant—whose name was Mr. Woodman—read the letter of introduction which was addressed to him, and then shook hands with August and Elvie with a special look of kindness in his face, and said he should be very happy to do anytong for the min his power.

The boys remained in the merchant's counting-room—which was a small room in the rear of the store—for some time, talking with Mr.

Woodman about their plans, and about the different people that lived up the valley. They obtained in this way a great deal of additional information in respect to the inhabitants of the valley, and the situation of the different farms, but all that Elvie heard made him more and more inclined to believe that Deacon Justin's was the place for them. The truth was that what chiefly interested him in this plan was what he had heard about Quimbo and Fan, little as it was. Indeed boys of his age generally require very little foundation of fact for very grand superstructures of imagination.

Mr. Woodman, when the boys left him, gave them a few lines of introduction to Deacon Justin, saying that the boys came to him with the highest recommendations, that they wished to make arrangements for board and residence for some weeks somewhere in the valley, and that the father of one of them was able and willing to pay whatever might be required to secure such accommodations as they might desire; and that he, Deacon Justin, might depend upon the full and faithful fulfilment of whatever conditions might be agreed to by the oldest of the boys.

Mr. Woodman said moreover that the letter which he gave them would serve for any of the other farmers that they might call upon, in case they should not find such accommodations as they required at Deacon Justin's.

The boys, taking the letter, bade Mr. Wood-man good-bye, and went away.

"I think Deacon Justin's will be the place for us," said Elvie-- "unless the deacon is cross. Are deacons generally cross?"

"Oh no," said August. "At least not that I know of. We can tell, however, something by his looks when we come to see him. We cannot decide till we go up the valley and we see the

places where the people live. And now, how shall we contrive to get a horse and sleigh, for our ride up the valley?"

"I don't know," replied Elvie. "Perhaps there is a livery stable somewhere about here."

"Perhaps there is," said August.

"Or perhaps we can get a horse and sleigh at the tavern," added Elvie.

"Can you go out to the stable to inquire?" asked August.

"Yes," said Elvie eagerly. "I should like to do it. You go in and wait in the sitting-room while I go and see. And if I find one I will engage it, if you say so, and come round to the door."

The boys reached this point in their conversation just at the time when they arrived at the hotel. So August went into the hotel, while Elvie went alone into the yard, on his way to the stable, to see if he could obtain a horse and sleigh.



CHAPTER VI.

Up the Valley.

IN about twenty minutes Elvie came driving around to the front door of the tavern in a sleigh. The sleigh was quite a handsome one, and was well furnished with buffalo robes. The horse too looked strong and fleet, and everything about the turn-out appeared extremely satisfactory.

Elvie waited a moment as he drove up to the door, thinking that the noise of the bells would attract August's attention, and bring him out. He was right in this anticipation, for almost immediately August appeared.

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"Well, Elvie," said August, "you have succeeded I see; and you've got a very nice sleigh."

"Yes," said Elvie. "I ought to have a nice one, for I had my choice out of four that were standing there in the yard. And you must sit over on the other side, for I'm going to drive."

So saying he made room for August to pass him, and then both the boys took their seats. Elvie drew up the reins, and the horse, understanding the movement as an indication that his party were ready, set off at once, and was soon trotting swiftly down the road.

They drove through the village to the church, and turned at the church to go up the road upon which Mr. Rosler's house was situated.

"We shall go by Mr. Rosler's house," said Elvie, "and if we see Johnny out sliding we might ask him to go with us."

It was very kind in Elvie to think of Johnny, and to wish to give him too the benefit and pleasure of a ride, but August thought it would not be best to do it.

"We don't know how long we shall be gone," said August, "nor what sort of a boy Johnny is."

"He seemed to be a pretty good sort of a boy," said Elvie.

"Yes," replied August, "that is true. But we don't know how he would act in different situations and circumstances, so we had better give him a ride some other day."

By this time they had reached the house, but although the morning was very bright and pleasant, and the air was quite mild, and although Elvie looked earnestly among the firtrees in Mr. Rosler's yard as he passed, Johnny was nowhere to be seen, and so the horse went by at full speed.

They soon found that they were entering a valley, and before long at a short distance before them there appeared a small hamlet, or cluster

of buildings, in the centre of which were some mills standing at the end of a dam which had been built to intercept the waters of a considerable stream which flowed through the valley. The boys had not observed this stream before—the road by which they had come having entered the valley at some little distance from the bed of it; and then besides, in all places where the flow of the water was not rapid, and was not broken by rocks and shoals, it was covered with ice and snow so as to be scarcely distinguishable from the land forming its banks. But now they saw the water plainly where it fell over the margin of the dam, and tossed and tumbled among the rocks below.

There were two mills near the dam, both carried by the water that was held back by it, and there were several houses near. There was also a small store and a blacksmith's shop. In fact the whole scene presented the appearance

of quite a pleasant little village. It appeared to be a somewhat lively place too, as several sleighs and sleds were to be seen moving to and fro, or standing at the entrance to the mills.

"This is a pleasant place," said Elvie.

"Perhaps there is some house here where we could stay."

"Let us stop and look about a little," said August.

So saying August drove up to a post by the roadside, near the little store, and Elvie fastened the horse to it. They then walked about for some time, first going down to see the dam, and the mill wheels, and the flume, which last was half choked up at the entrance with great cakes of ice.

"This must be the lower mills," said Elvie.

"They told us that Deacon Justin lived at the upper mill. But this would be a very nice place, and some of these houses look very pleasant."

The houses did indeed present quite an attractive appearance, being situated on little lanes, at various elevations above the level of the main road—each adorned with its own pretty little yard and garden, although there was at this season of the year nothing but the fences, the rows of shrubbery, and the gates, rising above the snow, to indicate the enclosures and the cultivation.

The boys looked at these houses and liked the appearance of several of them very much; but August thought that they probably were occupied chiefly by persons more or less connected with the mills, and that it would be better for their purpose to have more of a farm for their home. So they determined to return to the sleigh and go on.

The valley seemed to grow somewhat wider and more cultivated as they went forward up the road, though it was bordered on each side, at the distance of a mile or more, by irregularly-shaped hills which were nearly all covered with forests to their summits. Here and there among these hills, ravines and valleys were seen opening, and some of these formed very pretty-looking ravines, which Elvie thought he should like very much to explore in the summer.

"You can explore them much more easily when the snow gets hardened toward the spring," said August, "for then there is fine walking everywhere. When the snow is three or four feet deep, as it almost always is in the woods in this region, in March, and has become hardened by freezing after thaws, then all the holes and stumps and rocks, and little brooks and wet places are covered, and you can walk over everything on a surface as smooth and hard as a floor."

"Then I hope we shall stay here till March," said Elvie.

"Yes," said August," I hope so. Besides, that will be maple sugar time, and we can make some maple sugar perhaps, and take home with us to New York."

The boys were talking in this way together as they came down one of the lanes toward the place where they had left the horse tied. He was tied to a post a little way out of the road just above the mill. There were several sleds and sleighs standing also on one side, but near the mill,—leaving the middle of the road clear. As they were thus returning their attention was attracted by a sleigh coming along in the middle of the road up the valley in the same direction in which they had come. In the sleigh there was a boy about ten or twelve years old. and a girl by his side, apparently not more than four or five. The boy was driving, having the reins in one hand and the whip in the other, and the horse though on the trot was advancing at a moderate pace, as the road there was beginning to ascend. It continued to ascend, winding its way along the bank of the stream and among the trees, until it was lost to view at a turn above. But just at this instant August darted from Elvie's side, rushed down into the road, jumped into the sleigh, seized the reins from the boy with one hand, and snatched the whip from him with the other, and instantly gave the horse a severe cut across the back with it, pulling at the same time hard with one of the reins. The horse sprang forward out of the road into the loose snow, and one of the runners went up over a big log which was lying there so as nearly to upset the sleigh.

Elvie had just time to see all this, and to hear the little scream of terror which the girl uttered at being thus dealt with by a stranger, when his attention was caught again by the sight of a pair of runaway horses attached to an empty wood sled that was coming down the road upon the run, dangling straps and buckles about them, from the harness, and scattering loose boards and stakes upon the snow, from the sled, as they bounded along. August had just got the sleigh which contained the two children well out of the way, when the runaway team swept by like a tornado.

They all instinctively followed it with their eyes for a moment, when they saw a young man who had seen it coming, as he stood at the door of the mill, rush out as if he were going to try to intercept the flying horses. But instead of going out into the road, as Elvie had expected to see him do, and there brandish his arms before the horses in the attempt to stop them, he stood quietly on one side as if to let them pass.

"Stop them! Stop them!" cried out Elvie.

The man, however, made no effort to stop

the horses. He seemed rather to keep on one side a little, as if he wished to leave the way perfectly unobstructed and free to them. But the instant that their heads had passed the place where he was standing, he sprang forward, and grasping a stake which still remained in its place at the end of the sled, he leaped up on the bar or cross-piece which formed the end, and clung on desperately. For a moment it seemed uncertain whether he would succeed in making good his foothold, but he held on and gradually recovered an upright and secure position, when the whole group, horses, sled and man disappeared among the trees at a turn in the road down the valley.

"He'll stop them," said a man who was standing at the door of the mill, in the midst of a group that had come hastily to the door to see what was the matter.

In the meantime August, finding that the

danger was past, turned the horse which he had driven out of the road-way back toward the road again,—letting down the runner that had been raised upon the log as carefully as possible to its right level. The girl had started up from her seat, apparently a good deal frightened, and quite anxious lest the sleigh should be upset. As soon as the runners came fairly into the road, she settled herself back again into her seat, saying in a tone of great satisfaction.—

"There!"

The boy sat still as if stupefied with astonishment. August passed the reins and the whip back into his hands. He received them without speaking a word. August, who thought it was the boy's business to speak if he had anything to say in thanks for his having been saved, through August's presence of mind and promptness of action, from being run over and having his sleigh perhaps dashed to pieces, said nothing

either, but stepping out of the sleigh, returned to Elvie.

He and Elvie then went to their sleigh. August stepped into it and took his seat, leaving Elvie to unfasten the horse and drive on.

"You are driver," said he to Elvie, "and so I don't meddle with the horse."

"That's right," said Elvie. Elvie was indeed pleased with having everything left in this way to his management.

As they turned into the road and began to trot along at a gentle pace up the long ascent down which the runaway team had come so furiously, they saw the sleigh which August had apparently saved from destruction, at a short distance before them, and they soon observed that the boy who was driving it, hearing the sound of the bells behind him, turned his head to see who or what was coming. A moment afterward they saw the little girl who was sitting by his

side, turning round and climbing up upon the seat, so that by kneeling upon it and taking hold of the upper part of the back of the sleigh she could look back down the road and see August and Elvie coming.

Elvie was standing up at this time in the forward part of the sleigh. He often drove while thus standing up,—supporting himself in part by leaning against the dash board. He liked very much to do this, especially when the weather was sunny and pleasant. Besides the other advantages of this position, he obtained a better view of the road before him, as he could see over the horse's back,—and if he was only a very little taller, he said, he could even see over the horse's head. Besides by his standing up in this way, August had the seat in the sleigh left all to himself, and he could take the middle of it if he chose, and ride there quite at his ease like a gentleman at large.

Of course the girl in the forward sleigh, in looking back, could see Elvie in his standing position very easily. She seemed quite excited at seeing him, and danced up and down on the seat—so far as the motion of springing from the knees can be called dancing—to express her gladness and joy.

Elvie returned her salutation with a smile, and being somewhat encouraged by this she soon called out—

"Thank you!"

Elvie not knowing exactly what to say in reply, and yet wishing to acknowledge her thanks in some way, took off his cap and waved it in the air. This was in fact the very best thing he could have done. The child waved her hand in the air in reply.

"Thank you," said the child again, after a moment's pause, "thank you for not letting us get run over."

Here it seemed to Elvie from certain movements made by the boy, that he was trying to induce the girl to turn round and sit down. At any rate she did so. Then the next thing that attracted Elvie's attention was the sound of bells and of horses' feet, as if some kind of team was coming up behind him. He turned to look, and found that it was the runaway team which had so much startled them before, and which was now coming quietly up the valley. The man who had jumped upon the sled, after making sure his footing, had made his way very cautiously to the front part of it, had there skilfully recovered the reins, had gradually soothed and quieted the horses, and had finally stopped them, and was now on his return with them to restore them to their owner.

Elvie turned his sleigh a little way out of the road to let them pass. This movement, and the approach of the team, attracted the child's

attention, and she turned round and climbed upon the seat again so as to look back and see. She seemed to say something to the boy, and he looked around, and then began to turn his horse too out of the road. When he had thus made way for the passing team he stood up in his sleigh and looked back toward Elvie; and as both horses were now on the walk, on account of their being at this time in a somewhat steep part of the road, there was a pretty good chance for them to speak to each other, though they were still at some distance apart. The boy in the forward sleigh, though he was looking back to see what was coming behind him, turned very frequently to see that his horse was going right.

"Ask him," said August—speaking in an undertone—"if he knows where Deacon Justin lives."

So Elvie called out to the boy in the forward sleigh, and asked the question.

At first there was no answer. After a moment's pause Elvie repeated the question.

- "Yes," said the boy.
- "Well, where is it?" asked Elvie.
- "I'll show you when we get to it," said the boy.

He then turned around and sat down—as if he was not inclined to answer any more questions. The girl, however, remained kneeling.

"We'll show you when we get there," said the girl repeating the boy's answer in a somewhat louder voice, as if to make sure that Elvie heard it.

The runaway team now went by—trotting briskly notwithstanding the ascent. The man who had captured it was sitting quite at his ease, and with a very unconcerned air, upon a couple of ropes tied across between two stakes near the front, to form a seat. He looked at the

persons in both sleighs as he passed them, but said nothing.

As he passed by them the two sleighs, one after the other, returned into the road and the horses trotted on. August and Elvie observed the scenery with much interest and attention as they rode along. The way lay through a winding and fertile though somewhat narrow valley, and there were many pleasant farm-houses to be seen here and there with signs of gardens and orchards, though almost all marks of cultivation were buried up in the snow. There were, however, many indications of movement and life, such as loads of wood coming down the road toward the village, and now and then a great log,—one end resting upon an ox-sled and the other sliding along in the road and making a smooth path through the snow,—and box-sleighs loaded with bags and firkins going down to the stores—and once in a while a family sleigh taking a farmer and his wife, or two farmer's girls to the village, to do their shopping.

There were also a number of pleasant looking farmer houses along the road, plain and unpretending, but quite homelike and attractive in appearance. By the side of each of them there was usually a good road leading up into a wide yard between the house and the barn, where cattle were seen standing in the sun, or sheep feeding upon hay spread around them on the snow.

Into one of these yards Elvie saw the runaway team driven up, the place being the one where apparently it belonged. August and Elvie followed it with their eyes till it disappeared around a corner, and they saw it no more.

They still went on following the boy in the sleigh before them, who had promised to show them where Deacon Justin lived. After passing

two or three farm-houses, such as have been described, the child in the forward sleigh kneeled upon the seat again, and pointed to a house at a short distance before them. It stood back a little from the road and had large yards and barns about it. The child pointed to the house, calling out—

"That's the place."

To Elvie's great surprise the sleigh before them on arriving opposite this house, turned to go in at the road which led up to the yard.

"August," said Elvie turning around suddenly to August, "they are going to the same place. I verily believe that boy and girl are Quimbo and Fan."

"I should not wonder if they were," said August.





CHAPTER VII.

Deacon Justin's.

LVIE was right in his conjecture. The boy and girl in the sleigh before them were really Quimbo and Fan. They had been down into the village to do some errands,-or to execute some commissions, whichever way you choose to express it, for both phrases mean the same thing,—and were returning up the valley when they were saved from being run over through August's presence of mind and prompt and energetic action. Quimbo drove his horse into the yard by the side of the house, and stopped not far from the end door. As soon as he stopped, Fan hopped out of the sleigh—as nimble as a bird—and ran into the house to tell of her escape.

The door on that side opened into an entry, and thence by another door Fan passed into a large kitchen which extended along almost the whole length of the house on the back side. There were smaller rooms on one side of it, which smaller rooms formed the front part of the house. There was a large fire-place with an open fire on one side, and various other appurtenances appropriate to a farmer's kitchen all around; but everything was in perfect order.

Near a window toward the back side of the room which looked out upon a sunny back yard, an elderly woman was seated at a small worktable mending stockings or doing some other similar work.

Fan as soon as she came in ran to this woman, and cried out:

"Oh, grandmamma, we almost got run over,

but a man saved us—a small man, or else it was a big boy. I don't know exactly whether it was a man or a boy. But he is coming in to tell you about it, and then you will know. Here he comes now!"

This last exclamation was called forth by a gentle tap which Fan heard at the door. It was Elvie that was knocking. As soon as the two sleighs had stopped, August had asked Quimbo if this was the house where Deacon Justin lived, and on being answered in the affirmative by a nod from Quimbo, he had sent Elvie in to inquire if Deacon Justin was at home, while he remained in the sleigh.

Elvie was always ready to undertake commissions of this kind, and was especially so on this occasion, as he was curious to see what had become of Fan.

As soon as Fan heard his knock at the door, she scampered off towards one of the front

rooms, saying that she was going to tell her grandmother about it.

The person whom Fan called her grand-mother was a very old lady who lived in a chair, so to speak, in one of the front rooms. She was really Fan's great-grandmother. But as "great-grandmother," or "great-grand-mamma," would be an awkward appellation to use in common parlance, Fan had conceived the idea—in order to avoid the difficulty—of calling her real grandmother grand-mamma, and her great-grandmother grand-mother.

Elvie as soon as he came in asked the woman at the window if Deacon Justin was at home. She said he was not at home just then, but that he would be in soon. She also asked Elvie if there was any one with him. Elvie said that August was with him.

The woman then, who proved to be Mrs. Justin, asked Elvie to go out and bring August in.

"Quimbo will tie your horse for you," said she. "But first tell me what Fan means about your saving them from getting run over."

Elvie began to explain the case, and while he was doing so his eyes fell upon Fan who was holding the door leading into her grandmother's room open a little way, and peeping through. But the instant she observed that Elvie saw her she laughed and drew her face away, but then immediately put it back again, and so continued to do, as if playing at hide and seek with him. Elvie could not help smiling, and Mrs. Justin observed it; and looking toward the door and seeing Fan there, said:

"Don't be foolish, Fan. Come out here and see this young man, and show him some of your things."

"He is not the man," said Fan. "The other is the man."

But she did not come out, and Elvie went on

with his account of the runaway affair. Fan disappeared from the door a moment, and then returned, and drawing back the door a very little farther held up her doll in the opening, watching Elvie all the time through the keyhole; and then the moment that she saw him looking she would catch the doll away. She considered this perhaps a kind of compromise between obedience to her grandmamma's direction to come and show Elvie some of her things and her own desire to continue her play.

After Elvie had finished his account of the runaway accident, he went out and delivered his message to August and to Quimbo. Quimbo did not say a word in reply, but led the horse to a hook attached to one of the posts of the fence at one side of the yard, and then August and Elvie went into the house. Mrs. Justin received them in a very friendly manner, feeling

had rendered in the case of the runaway team. August handed her the letter which he had brought from Mr. Woodman. She received it, and seeing that it was addressed to her husband, she laid it down upon the little work-table near her, saying:

"Mr. Justin will be at home very soon I think. He went to the wood lot about an hour ago, and it is time for him to return."

Saying this she invited the boys to take seats near the fire, and entered into conversation with them about the runaway team.

August and Elvie were not cold, but it was pleasant to sit by such a grand fire, glowing too in so capacious a fire-place. The wood was large, and the big forestick rested on two immense andirons, with tops bent over and forming a curve at the summit by way of finish and ornament.

They had scarcely taken their seats when Mrs. Justin looking out at the window said that she saw her husband coming. In a few minutes he entered the room. He was quite an elderly man, and very grave and sedate in his appearance. Elvie at once decided that he was very stern if not cross,—and made up his mind that he should not like him, and should not be willing to stay at his house. At least he said to himself that if it were not for Fan he should not think of such a thing.

Mr. Justin nodded to the boys as he came in, but did not speak to them. His wife held up the letter which they had brought, and he went and took it. He then went to a part of the room where there was a kind of desk with a sloping lid closing up the front of it—such as is common in the country—drew out the slides in front made to support the lid when the desk is opened, turned down the lid upon the slides

and laid the letter upon it. Then he took off his coat and hung it up in the entry, and finally returned to his desk, took a seat before it in an arm-chair, and began to open the letter very deliberately. He found that there were in fact two letters—one enclosed within the other.

He read the letters twice, apparently in a very thoughtful manner. Then he looked up at the boys.

"You are August I suppose?" he said looking to August.

"Yes, sir," said August.

"And has Mr. Grant sent you two boys off alone on this expedition?" he asked.

"Yes sir," said August.

"Then," rejoined the Deacon after a short pause, "I think you must be two very remarkable boys."

August, not knowing what to say in reply to this remark, said nothing. It is an excellent general rule for us, when we do not know what to say, to say nothing; just as it is also generally best when it is not clear what to do, to do nothing.

The Deacon looked at the boys a moment in a somewhat scrutinizing manner, moving his eyes from one to the other as if considering what to do. Elvie determined in his own mind that Fan or no Fan he would never consent to stay in a house with such a man as that for the head of it.

"Well," said Deacon Justin at last, after a few minutes' pause, and rising from his seat as he spoke, "we must take a little time to consider this question. In the meanwhile you must have something to eat. It is time for luncheon. Can't you give them a little luncheon, grandmamma?"

Deacon Justin had fallen into the habit of alling his wife grandmamma in imitation of 10*

Fan. He had adopted this usage when Fan came to live at his house, on the death of her parents.

"Fanny," continued Mr. Justin, turning to Fan, who was standing demurely at one side, with her hands behind her, waiting apparently to see how things were going to turn out, "Fanny, can you help set the table and give the boys some luncheon. Perhaps you would be willing to give them one of your pies."

"Yes indeed," said Fan, beginning at once to jump up and down a little as if greatly pleased. "I'll give them two. They will need two, one for each of them."

"Oh no," said August, "one will be enough."

Fan immediately went to work assisting her grandmamma to prepare a table at the side of the room for the boys' luncheon. Mr. Justin told August and Elvie that they had better wait before deciding upon anything till the

had looked about the house and farm a little, so as to see how they should like the place.

"You can go out and ask Quimbo to put up your horse while they are getting the luncheon ready," said he, "and you can stay here and spend the day. Quimbo is going out into the woods soon with a sled to bring in a load of wood, and you can go out with him if you like, and see how the land lies. You can ride out with him on the sled, but you will have to walk back nearly a mile, unless you take a hand sled with you, and ride back on that, drawn along by the ox-sled."

So August and Elvie went out to find Quimbo, and to make the arrangements with him that Deacon Justin had suggested. When they told Quimbo that he was to put up their horse, and that they were to go with him to the wood lot, he simply said "Good!"

This was not very much it is true, but it was

satisfactory to the boys, as far as it went, as showing that Quimbo, notwithstanding his taciturnity, was pleased with the idea of having their company. The boys helped him to unharness the horse, and followed him into the stable to see him put the horse into a stall and give him some hay.

Elvie was much interested in what he saw in the stable, and in the yards adjacent to it—the stalls, the cattle feeding in them, the sheep feeding at the racks in the adjoining sheds, and the little flocks of poultry, consisting of turkeys, geese and hens. When at length the first impulse of his curiosity about these things was in some degree gratified, he and August returned to the house. They found that Deacon Justin had gone, and his desk was closed; but the table was all ready for their luncheon. The luncheon consisted of a small pie—about half the size of an ordinary one-and a pitcher of very rich

creamy milk, with two pretty mugs to drink it from. One of the mugs had the name Frances marked upon it in gilt letters. This was indeed Fan's mug. It was selected for her by her grandfather from a number of mugs in Mr. Woodman's store, on account of this name being upon it. Frances being Fan's real name. There were also of course plates, and knives and forks, for the pie.

The boys took their seats at the table and began to eat their luncheon with excellent appetites, for they had done so much business since breakfast, and passed through so many different scenes that they began to be quite hungry. They tried to persuade Fan to come and join them, but as soon as they proposed it she ran off into her grandmother's room and hid.

"Oh, Fan," said her grandmamma, "don't be so foolish. Come back and take a piece of your pie."

"I'm sorry she is so shy," added Mrs. Justin speaking to the boys. But she'll get acquainted by and by."

The boys finished their luncheon, and then putting on their coats and caps they went out to see what preparations Quimbo had made for taking them out into the woods. As they were passing through the entry Elvie said,

"I thought he was going to be rather a cross man, but it was very nice in him to think of giving us a luncheon, at any rate; and it was a very nice luncheon too."

"Yes," said August. "And I find it often happens that people we think we are not going to like at first, turn out to be very nice people after all."





CHAPTER VIII.

Gaining Information.

found a yoke of oxen and a sled in the middle of the yard, apparently all ready. There was moreover a large hand-sled—of the frame kind—attached by its rope to the hindermost bar of the ox-sled.

"Good," said Elvie. "That is the sled that we are to ride home on."

Quimbo was coming toward the ox-sled with a couple of ropes in his hand.

"Are you all ready?" asked Elvie.

Quimbo shook his head but did not speak.

He proceeded to the ox-sled, and throwing one

of the ropes down upon the snow he began to tie one end of the other rope around the second stake on the right-hand side.

"Ah," said Elvie, "he is going to make us a rope seat."

Elvie recollected seeing a rope seat, made by drawing a rope twice across from the second stake on the right side to the second stake on the left side, in the sled of the runaway team—making a seat for the driver in the sag between. He supposed that Quimbo was going to do the same, but he saw that when Quimbo had fastened one end of the rope to the second right-hand stake, instead of carrying it across to the second left-hand stake, he carried it along the side of the sled to the third one on the right hand.

"That is not the way," said Elvie. "You ought to carry it across."

Quimbo shook his head but did not speak.

"He is going to make us ride sideways," said Elvie.

Quimbo seemed to smile, though it was in a somewhat furtive manner, but went on with his work. When he had made what Elvie called a "side-seat," formed by carrying the rope back and forth once or twice between the two right-hand stakes, he went to the left-hand side and proceeded there in the same manner. Elvie stepped up on the sled, and walking along on the boards which formed the floor of it, sat down upon the ropes which Quimbo had stretched between the two stakes.

"It is a very good seat," said he, "only we have to ride sideways."

Quimbo smiled again, a little more perceptibly than before. He however went on steadily with his work, until he had made another side-seat—as Elvie considered it—between the two left-hand stakes.

The truth was that a seat formed of ropes passing across from side to side, though it is comfortable enough for one person sitting in the middle, will not answer at all for three, as the sag of the rope would tilt the outside ones in toward the one in the centre, so as to make the position uncomfortable for all. Quimbo, who knew this very well, was carrying into effect a different plan-which consisted in making rope supports on the sides, to sustain a board seat to pass across between them. Accordingly after securing his ropes in a proper manner, he went into the barn, and bringing out a board of the right length and width, which he kept for this purpose, he laid it upon the two supports, one end upon each. This board formed an excellent seat, which, while it kept itself rigidly in a horizontal position, admitted of a slight swinging and springing motion to make it easy, through the elasticity of the ropes.

"Ah yes!" said Elvie, "now I understand."
He had risen when he saw Quimbo coming with the board, and then at once took his seat at one end of the board when it was in place. August at once took his seat at the other end, leaving a place for Quimbo in the middle.

They soon set out. The way led through a kind of lane where there was a well beaten track. The bars were all taken out of the way, and the gates were set open, as usual in the winter, so that there were no obstructions, and the oxen seemed to know the way. Quimbo answered such questions as the boys asked him, but he generally answered in monosyllables, and seemed very little inclined to conversation. There was something however in his air and bearing which led the boys to imagine that he was glad they were going with him, notwithstanding his extreme taciturnity.

The road soon began to descend by a long

winding way toward what seemed to be a pond. It was in fact another mill pond, formed upon the Granville Valley stream by a dam a short distance below Deacon Justin's farm. The surface of this pond was formed of alternate patches of hardened snow and of smooth glassy ice. A few boys were skating upon the ice, for the patches were connected with each other in such a way that the boys could pass from one to another, so as to traverse quite long distances without going over any snow.

"Why, August!" said Elvie, "here is a splendid skating place!"

"Yes," said August. "It will be a very splendid one if there should come a thaw so as to melt all the snow upon the ice, and afterward freeze it all smooth."

"Is it ever so, Quimbo?" asked Elvie.

"Oh yes," said Quimbo, "very often."

"And does Deacon Justin let you go and skate upon it at such times?" asked Elvie.

"Oh yes," said Quimbo, "always. He is very willing to let me play. He says I don't get play enough."

Then Quimbo, as if frightened at hearing himself speak so many words, relapsed into silence, and said no more for a long time.

The road that descended the hill entered upon the ice at the foot of it and so passed across the pond. The boys could see the track winding its way over the patches of ice and snow, and afterward it disappeared in a copse of trees and bushes on the opposite bank.

The oxen and sled moved slowly on, down upon the ice, and across the ice to the opposite shore, and then ascending again to the land the whole party entered the wood. Very soon the boys began to hear the echoes of an axe, as of a woodman felling trees.

" Hark!" said Elvie.

"It is Timothy," said Quimbo, "getting out wood."

The plan of the work was, it seems, for Timothy to remain in the wood lot felling the trees, and then cutting the trunks into the right lengths, and splitting them to the right thickness, for easy loading upon the sled; and then, when Quimbo came with a team, to help him load the sled. When the party of boys arrived at the spot, they found him at work upon a fresh tree which was just ready to fall. They stopped the oxen and waited to see the tree come down. It began at first with a very slow, and indeed scarcely perceptible motion, and moving faster and faster, it ended with a mighty crash as it came down to the ground.

August, as soon as he understood what the plan of the work was, told Timothy that he and Elvie would help Quimbo load the sled, so that he—that is Timothy—might go on with his work of felling more trees and getting ready more wood.

"Good," said Elvie. "I like that. I'll help load, and then I can see another tree come down."

August and Elvie accordingly began the work of loading the sled, following the directions of Quimbo in respect to the wood which they were to take, and the manner in which they were to place it upon the sled. Elvie had the pleasure of seeing one other tall tree come down while they were doing their work, and he became so much interested in the operation that he proposed to August that they should remain in the woods helping Timothy until Quimbo should return for another load. But August thought it best to adhere to the original plan, and go back with the first load. Accordingly when the load was ready they fastened the hand-sled securely behind, and he and August, riding a part of the time upon the hand-sled, and walking a part of the time with Quimbo by the side of the oxen, returned to the house.

They helped Quimbo to unload the sled, laying the wood as they did so in the continuation of a long pile which was gradually extending itself along one side of the yard. Then they were summoned by a bell to dinner. The dinner was a plain farmer's dinner, but it was abundant, and made sumptuous with puddings and pies at the end.

After dinner Deacon Justin put on his coat and cap, saying that he was obliged to go away, and then added:

"We won't absolutely decide this question today," said he. "You see a little how things are here, and I should be very glad to have you conclude to stay here. But you must not decide hastily. People that decide in haste often have to repent at leisure. The principal difficulty will be a place to put you at night,—but perhaps we can fix up Fan's chamber as we call it—that is a chamber that is going to be hers when we get it finished. Fan will go up and shew you her room, and you will see whether you think you can make it answer."

Deacon Justin had some further conversation with August, in which he said that if on mature reflection he and Elvie concluded that they would like to come to his house, he would receive them on certain terms which he named, as to board. Moreover if he—August—wished to attend the academy, as it might be rather far to walk, he could have a sleigh to ride down every morning provided that Elvie would drive.

"Can you drive, Elvie?" he asked, turning to Elvie.

"Oh yes, sir," said Elvie. "I drove on horseback all through Massachusetts and New York."

Elvie referred, in saying this, to the expedition which he made with August, and which is described at length in the volume of this series entitled "Hunter and Tom." "Then you can certainly drive to the village and back," said Deacon Justin. "And then I should know that you might be trusted with such a duty as that by your looks. And besides you can be of some service to us by doing this, for you can take Fan in the sleigh with you and leave her at her school, which is about a quarter of a mile down the road. And indeed, when the mornings are not too cold, she can go with you away into the village to the academy and you can leave her at her school when you come back."

Fan seemed greatly exhilarated with this idea, and jumped about the room—her countenance beaming with delight—to express her pleasure.

After saying this and many more things necessary to give August and Elvie a full understanding of the case, Deacon Justin went away. Fan immediately offered to guide the boys to her room.

"I call it my room," said she, "but it is not mine yet, for it is not all made. They are going to finish it some day, and then when I get bigger—too big for my trundle bed—I'm going to live in it and have some books."

The room, when the boys were conducted to it, they found was quite unfinished. The floor was laid and the doors and windows were in, and the walls and ceiling were plastered, and there was a fireplace, where, however, there appeared never to have been any fire; but the room was not painted or papered, and there was no furniture in it of any kind. The ceiling in the centre was flat for a considerable space, but on each side it was sloping, on account of the roof; for the room was made in a kind of an attic over an addition to the house on the kitchen side. It was, however, connected with the main body of the house, and with the stairs leading down, by a very pretty little passageway. There was a door on the other side which opened upon another passage-way, at the end of which was a flight of back stairs.

"Here will be a nice place for my bed," said August in passing through this passage-way. "They can put me up some kind of a cot bed here, and a curtain before it, and there is a place where I can put a cleat up, with a row of nails to hang up my clothes."

The boys then went back into the room again. Elvie was very much pleased with the aspect of it. "It was so cunning," as he said. August said he was sure that Elvie's father would be willing to have them expend what was necessary to finish and furnish it.

"But I don't want anything done," said Elvie.

"I like it just as it is—if they will only put in a bed and a table. And here," he added, "is a little closet to hang up my clothes in.

"Only," he added on looking in, "there are

no nails yet. And there is no door. But that's no great matter."

"I'm sure," said August, "that your father will be willing to have us spend all the money that is necessary to put everything in order, and to get some furniture. And then think how pleased Fan will be to find her room all ready for her when we go away."

Elvie was ready at once to concur in the plan of finishing and furnishing the room in view of this aspect of the case. Fan seemed much pleased too. "I can come up here and sit by the window," she said, "and have it for my play room before I get too big for my trundle bed."

After remaining in the room for some time, and deciding where the bed and the table, and various other principal articles of furniture should be placed, Fan led the way down the back stairs, and August and Elvie followed her. These stairs descended to a passage-way on the lower

floor which led out to some back rooms and to the shop, and to a side door leading out to the sheds and the barns. This, August said, would be very convenient for them in case they wished to get up early in the morning, and to go down without any danger of disturbing the family.

After some further conversation with Mrs. Justin, who seemed to be a very kind and motherly woman, the boys bade her good-bye saying that they would come up the next day or the day after, to tell her what decision they had come to. August said that perhaps he should wait until he could hear from Elvie's father before he positively decided. The boys then went out into the yard and found Quimbo coming in with his first afternoon load of wood. They helped him unload it, and then he with their assistance harnessed their horse into the sleigh, and they set out on their return down the valley. It has view-appeared a of bohamoon ransia



CHAPTER IX.

Plan of Study.

"WELL, August," said Elvie, as the horse began to trot along the road with them on their return down the valley, "what do you think of it? Have you made up your mind?"

"No," said August. "We have only been gaining information thus far. We have got to think of it now, and then make up our minds after we have thought about it."

"And what do you think about it?"

"Why, it looks as if it would be a pleasant place for us, but whether the plan of our going there will work well or not will depend upon how much of a man you are."

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"How so?" asked Elvie.

"Why, if we board at Deacon Justin's, and I go to the academy every day, you will be left alone to study every day for two hours, after you get back from taking me down to the village. Now when you get back, and Quimbo unharnesses the horse, and is just ready to set off with his team to go into the woods, there will be nobody to see that you go to your room to your studies but yourself. The temptation will be very great for you to stay and play about while Quimbo is getting ready, and even to go with him to help him to get his load. Now the first question is whether you would be man enough to take care of yourself about it, and to go to your studies of your own accord, as soon as you get back from the village, without there being anybody there to see that you did it."

"Perhaps Mrs. Justin might see to it," said Elvie, speaking, however, rather hesitatingly. "That might do," said August, "if you were a small boy four or five years old, but I should not quite like to put a boy so old as you under the charge of a woman to see that he attended to duties which he might just as well attend to himself."

"No," said Elvie. "I should rather attend to it myself! But when should you have me say my lessons?"

"You would not have any lessons to say," replied August. "I talked with your father expressly about that. He said that he did not care about your learning any lessons. It would be time enough to come to that when you go to school. For this winter what you had to do was not to learn lessons, but to practice arts."

"To practice arts!" replied Elvie with surprise. He could not imagine what August meant.

[&]quot;Yes," said August. "There are four arts,

he said, which he wished you to acquire skill in, by practice, and that was all that he wished you to do. These four arts are reading, writing, spelling and arithmetic. He said that for this winter he did not care about your learning and reciting any lessons at all, if you would only practice, steadily and carefully for two hours each day, those four arts,—half an hour for each one. It would be best I suppose to take arithmetic for the first."

"But who would show me how to do the sums?" said Elvie.

"You must do such as you know how to do already," said August. "That's what your father said. He does not care so much, he said, about your learning how to do new things, but only to acquire readiness, and skill, and certainty, in doing old ones. He said you might open your book anywhere, and copy the sums upon your slate, or upon a leaf in your copy-

book, and do them. If you find them too hard, you must turn back to where they are easier. What he is most particular about, he said, was adding. A boy that can add readily and surely without counting, can go on very fast with everything else in the arithmetic, but if he gets puzzled and makes mistakes in adding, or has to count, by drumming with his fingers on the slate, he will be continually getting into difficulty in everything that comes afterwards. So that what you will have to do in the arithmetic half hour will be to find and copy upon your slate sums easy enough for you to know how to do them, but yet hard enough to afford you some useful practice in the work, and then show me how much you have done when I get home."

"I could do that well enough," said Elvie.

"Yes, you could," said August, "but the question is whether you would. Most boys left to themselves at such work, would do one or

two sums and then would spend their time in looking out the window to see the snow flakes, or the snow birds if there were any there—or in watching the sand in the half-hour glass, and shaking the glass to make the sand run faster."

"The half-hour glass?" repeated Elvie, in an enquiring tone.

"Yes," replied August. "Your father recommended to me to get a half-hour glass for you to study by, and I did. It is in my trunk."

"I am glad of it," said Elvie. "I shall like to study by a half-hour glass."

"It is a very good time-measurer to study by," said August, "if you don't spend too much time in watching the sand."

"What are the other arts that I am to practice?" asked Elvie.

"The second is reading," replied August. "A boy can learn to improve in reading almost as

well in reading to himself as he can in reading to a teacher, if he will only take an interest in his improvement, and watch himself to see that he reads slowly and carefully, and does not skip or miscall any of the words. For this purpose you must have some simple and entertaining story book to read, that will not have in it anything that requires much thought to divert your mind from your manner of reading."

"That will be only fun," said Elvie, "to read such a book as that."

"It will be very useful fun nevertheless," said August, "if you do it right. You must turn your chair around and take a good position, and imagine you have somebody in the room to listen to you, and must read distinctly and carefully, with all the right tones of voice, as if you were reading to some person or persons and were trying to make them understand distinctly what you were reading. You can

imagine that Fan is there if you please, and that you are reading the story to her."

"Yes," said Elvie looking around eagerly to August as they rode along in the sleigh, "some days perhaps, when it is stormy, and she does not go to school, I can have her up in my room for my audience."

"That will be an excellent plan," said August,
"provided that you do not stop to talk and play
after the half-hour glass is turned and your
reading half hour has commenced. If she
speaks to you at any time to ask questions, or
to talk about the story, you must turn down the
half-hour glass upon its side, and stop the sand
from running till you are ready to begin again.
You see you must have the whole half hour for
reading."

[&]quot;Yes," said Elvie. "I'll be honest."

[&]quot;I have no doubt you will be honest," said August, "but you might forget."

"I'll try not to forget," said Elvie.

"I would try faithfully," said August, "if I were you; for you will want to have your father see, when you go back to New York, that his plan of trusting to you has succeeded, and that you have learned to read in a correct and fluent manner."

"What is fluent?" asked Elvie.

"Why, right along," said August—"without stopping and hesitating and stumbling over the words."

August's definition was perhaps well calculated to give Elvie a good practical idea of the import of the word. The original and exact meaning of it is, however, simply *flowing*.

"You might even sometimes," said August,
"when Fan is at school, take your book down
stairs and read a story to Mrs. Justin, when she
is ironing or sewing or doing some other kind of
work that will not prevent her listening."

"Good!" said Elvie. "I should like that very much. Only perhaps she would not care about my kind of stories."

"Yes," said August. "I have brought some books of short stories for you to read, that she will like to hear. She can tell them afterward to Fan if she likes. These books are to be kept expressly for your reading lessons. You are not to read them except when you read aloud for practice."

"Well," said Elvie after a short pause, "there are two half-hours. Now for the other two."

"The third is writing," said August. "I have got a nice blank book in my trunk, for you to write in."

"And you'll set me the copies?" said Elvie.

"No," replied August. "You will not have any copies. You know how to make all the letters now, and if I find, in looking over your work, that you are in the habit of making any

one of them wrong, I will shew you on a separate slip of paper how to make it right. What you want now, your father said, is careful practice of continuous writing, and the best way to get that is to copy something out of a book. So you are to copy into your book anything that you find in the books and papers that you would like to have -anecdotes-poetry-riddles-conundrumsand all such things, taking care to arrange them right and to put in the proper headings, and to notice how the words are spelled and what stops are put in; that is doing everything correctly and properly as it is in the book that you copy from. Your father says that if you can only be induced to write in this manner with care and attention —without ever doing any hasty work—you will learn writing, spelling and punctuation, all together, faster than in any other way. And then you see when I am at home in the evening, I can look over your work and see how you get along."

Elvie paused a moment to reflect upon this method of learning writing, spelling and punctuation all in one, and then said:

"Well there are three of the half hours, now for the fourth. What is the fourth art that I am to practice?"

"The fourth half hour is not for practicing an art, but for acquiring knowledge. You see in the third half hour you take two arts at a time writing and spelling. That finishes with the arts; arithmetic in the first, reading in the second, and writing and spelling in the third. In the fourth half hour you are to take some book of useful knowledge, read a portion of it carefully, and take notes."

"Take notes?" repeated Elvie. "I don't know how to take notes."

"It is easy enough," replied August. "You have a slip of paper and a pencil by the side of you, when you read, and you make memoranda

upon the paper of anything you don't quite understand and want to ask me about,—and also of any date or any other circumstance that you might forget; or of anything that you will wish to tell me about. Then when I come home and look over the work that you have done, I shall see the notes you have made on the slip, and you will tell me what you read and ask me any questions about it. You see the book which you have in the second half hour—for practicing in the art of reading—will be some entertaining story, very easily understood, and containing no special information. But for your fourth half hour it will be a book of useful knowledge. Your father chose a book for you. It is called The Autobiography of Franklin."

"I never heard of that book," said Elvie.

[&]quot;No," replied August, "I suppose not. It is an account of the life of a very distinguished man."

"Is it interesting?" asked Elvie.

"I don't know whether you will find it interesting or not," replied August. "Your father did not choose it because it would be interesting, but because it contained information important for you. In your first reading half hour you will have books that are interesting, but in this half hour a book is chosen that contains what is useful to know. So your father said that in this half hour you must read, not for the pleasure of the reading at the time, but for the profit of learning what the reading lesson teaches you."

In the midst of this conversation in respect to the plans for Elvie's studies the boys came in sight of a school-house by the side of the road. At the time they passed it, it appeared to be shut up, and there was nobody near it, — but the snow was well trampled down all around the door, and in the yard, and there was a large pile of wood—some of it ready prepared for the fire—under a small shed at one end. These signs shewed that the school-house was only temporarily deserted. Indeed the school for the day was done, and the children had all gone home.

"I verily believe that this is the school that Fan goes to," said Elvie.

"Yes," said August, "and that is where you will have to leave her every morning."

"When it is a pleasant day," said Elvie, "we will start early and give Fan a long ride down to the village and back."

"Yes," said August.

"And when I come back if the school has not begun, and the children are out upon the steps, I'll give them all a ride a little way up the road."

"Yes," said August.

"Or at least as many as can get into the sleigh," added Elvie, after thinking a moment.

"Yes," said August.

"And as can cling to the runners," continued Elvie. "Some of the boys can ride on the runners. They would rather do it than to get into the sleigh."

"I think they would," said August, "that is if they are only big enough to hold on. It would please them all very much, and brighten up their spirits for the whole day, to give them such a ride. That would be doing a great deal of good in a very easy way."

"If there was not room enough for them all in and on the sleigh," continued Elvie, growing more and more interested in the idea of giving the children a ride, "some of them could fasten their sleds on behind, and ride in that way."

The more Elvie thought of this plan, the better he was pleased with it. Indeed it is a general principle that not only is it true that the more good a person does the more pleasure he takes in doing good,—but even the act of thinking of it, and planning for it, increases his interest in the work. One of the best ways consequently of making a selfish person kind-hearted and benevolent—or at least of commencing the change—is to induce him by some means to make some one little experiment of promoting the welfare or happiness of his fellow creatures.

At one of the farm-houses that they passed, Elvie's attention was attracted to a barn-yard where a number of cattle were standing, and among them some half-grown calves. This set Elvie's thoughts to running in a new direction.

"Look at those big calves, August," said he.

"I should like one of them to ride. I recollect seeing a picture once of a boy riding horseback on a calf."

"Horseback on a calf," repeated August, laughing.

"Well, at any rate he was on the calf's back,

and he had a kind of bridle that he was going to guide the calf by. But I remember that the calf had his legs braced forward, as if he was meaning not to go."

"That's what I should have done," said August, "if I had been the calf."

"Do you think that Deacon Justin would be willing to have me bridle one of his calves," said Elvie, "and ride him?"

"Why he seems rather a kind-hearted man," said August, "and so I should think it possible he might let you if he thought you were boyish enough to care for any such nonsense. He might, however, think that you were big enough to choose to have a real horse to ride, rather than such a sham and make-believe as a calf."

"On the whole," said Elvie, "I think I should prefer a horse,"

"I have no doubt," said August, "that we can make an arrangement by which you can have a horse as much as you like, as soon as the weather softens and the roads become open, towards the spring."

"That will be the best plan," said Elvie, "decidedly."

The boys being occupied with such thoughts and such conversation as is above described, the time passed very quickly with them, and the road down the valley seemed quite short. They arrived in the village and drove up to the door of the tavern about half an hour before the sun went down. August went into the house, and left Elvie to take the sleigh round to the stable.





CHAPTER X.

Correspondence.

UGUST went directly to his room on entering the tavern, and at once took out his writing materials, and commenced a letter to Elvie's father, giving him a full account of his inquiries and negotiations in finding a place for Elvie and himself. He thought, it is true, that he was fully authorized to close the arrangement with Deacon Justin, and to expend what was necessary to make the room comfortable for Elvie. But since it would only cause a short delay to report to Mr. Grant, and to obtain his sanction to the plan, he thought it best to wait for this in order to feel sure that he was right.

So he went to his room, replenished the fire—which had by this time become rather low—drew a chair up to the table, took out his writing materials, and by the time that Elvie came in from the stable he had made a very good beginning upon his letter.

As soon as Elvie came in he began at once to talk, as if he did not observe that August was engaged in writing—as boys of his age are very apt to do in such cases.

"Now, Elvie," said August, "you must not interrupt me more than you can help, for I am writing a letter to your father, and I have as much as I can do to get my letter done in time to mail it to-night, so that it can go out to-morrow morning. I advise you to get out your writing materials and begin a letter to your father yourself, so that it may go with mine."

"Oh no," said Elvie, in a somewhat fretful tone. "I am tired, and I don't feel like writing this afternoon."

"Just as you please," said August, "I only advise."

"But I don't know what to say."

"Get your paper ready," said August, "and date it, and be ready to begin, and I'll tell you what to say."

"I don't see how you can do that," rejoined Elvie, "without interrupting your own writing."

"You have nothing to do with that," said August. "That is my business. All you have to do is to get ready to begin. You may get ready or not just as you please, but you conclude not to do it, please not speak to me till I have finished my letter."

So August went on writing, while Elvie took his seat in a rocking chair that was standing there, near the fire, and sat watching the fire. He appeared not to be in very good humor.

At length, however, he came to himself, as it were, and concluded that it was best to do as

August had recommended. So he took out a sheet of paper and placed himself at the table with pen and ink all ready.

- "Well," said he, "I'm ready to begin."
- "Have you dated your letter?" asked August.
- "No," said Elvie.
- "Well, date it then. You must not call upon me till you have gone as far as you can yourself."

So Elvie wrote the date on the right hand upper margin of his note paper, and the words "Dear Father," on the left hand a little below.

"Now!" said Elvie—looking up, as he said it, for August to tell him what to write.

"Just tell him where we have been to-day," said August, "while I am finishing this sentence."

So Elvie began and wrote several lines in silence.

"There!" said he. "I've written that."

"Have you told him who were there that we saw?" asked August.

"No," said Elvie.

"Well, tell him that," said August. "Your father would like to know what persons we saw."

So Elvie wrote again a little while, and then said again:

"Well!"

"Is there anything else you think of, that we saw," asked August—" that your father would like to know about?"

"About the room," said Elvie. "He might like to know about the room."

"Well, tell him that then," said August.

So Elvie began to write again. But before he had finished his sentence August asked:

"How do you think it would do to make a list of the furniture and things you would like for the room, and ask him if I may buy them for you?"

"It will be a good plan," said Elvie. "I'll do it."

"Make out the list as well as you can yourself, without stopping to speak to me about it," said August. "You can do it perfectly well yourself. Write the list in a column on the left-hand side of the page, so as to leave room for the prices opposite."

"But I don't know the prices," said Elvie.

"You can leave room for them at any rate," said August. "And you may speak to me when it is necessary; but do as much as you can yourself without interrupting me, and then I can go on faster with my letter. Let me see how you have got along so far."

So saying August took Elvie's sheet to see what he had already done.

"Yes," said he, "that is a good beginning, and it is all written very plain. Your father will be much pleased to receive a letter from

you as quick as he gets one from me. It will shew him that you are prompt and efficient."

Encouraged by these words, Elvie went on writing, and took pains not to interrupt August when he could possibly help it. Indeed he only had to speak to him once for a long time, and that was to ask him how to spell the word bureau.

As for August himself, he gave, in his letter, an account of the calls that he and Elvie had made upon Mr. Rosler and Mr. Woodman, and of their recommendation of Deacon Justin's as the best place for Elvie—and also of his and Elvie's subsequent visit to Deacon Justin's house. He described the family, so far at least as to give a brief account of the persons composing it, and stated particularly the terms on which he and Elvie could be received. He also gave an account of Fan's room. He said that it would be tolerably comfortable for Elvie as it was,—

with such furniture as the family could put into it,—but that if Mr. Grant wished he could have it put in nice order, and some good furniture put in. He added that Elvie was making a list of such things as he would like to have if his father was willing.

The boys had nearly though not quite finished their letters when the bell rang for tea. It had become dark while they were in the midst of their writing, and Elvie had lighted the lamp. When the tea bell rang they went down to tea and then returned to finish their work.

Elvie found as is usual in such cases, that when he had once begun he had plenty to say; so that when August had finished his letter, he was still writing. He however then soon came to a close. August having folded his own letter, said:

"And now let me look over yours and correct the ten mistakes."

"The ten?" inquired Elvie.

"Yes," said August. "I ought to expect at least ten words misspelt in your letter:—for you have spelled them all but one yourself, because you did not wish to interrupt me. I shall think you have done remarkably well if there are not more than ten errors."

So August looked over the letter, and he did not find but five errors. This pleased and encouraged Elvie very much. Indeed whether your young brother or sister is encouraged or discouraged by the manner in which you regard their efforts, depends very much upon the way in which you speak of their faults and errors. What August said seemed to imply that it was a matter of course that a boy like Elvie should not get all the words in a letter spelled right. and he spoke moreover in such a way as to make the number that he actually found fewer than he had expected to find. He thus led Elvie to feel satisfied with his effort, as it was right and proper that he should be, since he had really taken pains, and had done as well as could have been reasonably expected for a boy of his age and limited experience in writing.

He might however have greatly discouraged him by a different way of presenting the subject to his mind. He might have said for example:

"Now I'll look over your letter and see if any of the words are spelled wrong. Your father won't like it very well if he finds you don't know how to spell."

And then in looking over the letter, if he had counted up the five misspelled words with a tone and manner indicating that he was disappointed and sorry to find so many, and had told Elvie that he must be more careful next time—however kindly and gently he might have done it, Elvie would have felt reproved, and would have been discouraged, though he deserved no reproof and

had no occasion for discouragement—for he had done as well as he could, and was on the high road to ultimate success in learning to write letters correctly.

As it was, Elvie was much pleased with his letter, and was very glad that he had followed August's advice in writing it. His letter was as follows:

"GRANVILLE, Wednesday Afternoon.

"Dear Father,

"We have been up the valley road to-day to Deacon Justin's. We went in a sleigh; I drove. We saw Mrs. Justin, Quimbo, Timothy and Fan. Fan is a very lively little girl. Quimbo is not lively at all. We saw Deacon Justin too. He looks very sober. We helped get a load of wood.

"List of things I should like to have in Fan's room if you are willing.

- "Bedstead and bed.
- "Bureau for my clothes.
- "Table.
- "Three chairs: one for me, one for August, and one for Fan when she comes. A little chair will do for her.
 - "Oh! and a looking-glass.
- "I don't think of anything else except andirons and shovel and tongs.
- "There is a good long sliding place down the wood road toward the pond and good skating on the pond.
- "I had some more things to say, but there is no more time, for August has finished his letter and mine must go with his.

"Your affectionate son,

"ELPHINSTONE GRANT."

After both letters were finished, and Elvie's had been read, and the few errors of spelling had

been corrected, August enclosed them in the same envelope, and he and Elvie went together to the post-office to mail them. When Elvie saw the double letter dropped safely into the letter-box he was very glad that he had had the resolution to follow August's advice and write to his father.

"You thought at first," said August, "that you would not be able to think of anything to say."

"Yes," replied Elvie;" but I found that I had plenty to say when I had once begun."

"It is always so," said August. "Just begin, and the thoughts come to you faster than you can write them. And that's a secret I advise you to remember when you grow older and go to school, and have to write composition. The boys and girls in schools, when they have composition to write, spend a great deal of time in thinking of it, and dreading it, and imagine that

they have not any ideas on the subject that is given them."

This I think was very good advice on the part of August. And I would strongly recommend to all the readers of this book to remember it, and to act upon it. If they do so, they will find that it is a sure method of removing a very large part, if not the whole, of the trouble and distress which writing compositions generally occasions. When the subject is given you do not wait for "thoughts" before you begin to write, but only for one thought. There is no subject whatever —if you know the meaning of the words that express it—which does not suggest some thought or idea to your mind. Sit down then at once and express that, and the very act of expressing that one will bring others to your mind, so that you will very soon find that instead of having nothing to say you have more thoughts to express than you have paper to contain the expression of them.

When scholars in a school, therefore, have a subject assigned for composition, there is never any necessity for them to say that they cannot write upon it, and worry and distress themselves with the idea that they do not know anything to say about it. For whatever the subject may be, as I have already said, if you know the meaning of the word, the very hearing of it must awaken some thought or idea in your mind. Now instead of imagining that you cannot think of anything to say on the subject, all you have to do is to seize upon that thought, whatever it is, sit down at once to your paper, clothe that thought in words, and write the words. Before you have written the words another thought will suggest itself, and then another, and in the end you will generally find that you have more to write than you have room for on your paper.

August and Elvie tried an experiment upon each other in respect to writing composition, one

day after Elvie had commenced his studies, which illustrates clearly what is said above. What this experiment was, and how it resulted will perhaps be explained in a future chapter.

August was pretty well satisfied that it would be best for him and Elvie to go to Deacon Justin's,—but as it would only take about two days, or a little more, to hear from Elvie's father, he thought it would be safer to wait for his decision. It was on Wednesday evening that the letters were mailed, and he thought it possible that he might receive an answer some time on Saturday. It proved however that he did not have to wait so long as he expected, for on Friday morning a telegram came. On opening it he found it contained the following ten words:

"Arrangement entirely satisfactory. Finish and furnish the room. Letter to-morrow."

The boys were both much pleased with the

receipt of this telegram. It opened the way for August to go on at once and close the arrangement, and he immediately sent Elvie around to the stable to engage a sleigh, and they set off, as soon as it was ready, to go up to Deacon Justin's and inform him of the result.





CHAPTER XI.

Going to Housekeeping.

THAT day was a very busy day with the boys. Before the telegram came they had been together to the Academy to see what arrangement could be made there in respect to August's studies, and had found everything satisfactory. They were all ready therefore at once to set off for Deacon Justin's. Both Deacon Justin and his wife seemed much pleased to learn that the boys were coming to live with them, and even Quimbo nodded his head and smiled, when he heard the news. As for Fan, she was at school at the time, and did not hear of it till she came home,—but when she did hear

of it she was quite wild with excitement and delight.

Deacon Justin said that his wife would see what furniture she could find in the house to put into the room, but August replied that he was authorized by Elvie's father to buy furniture for it, such as Elvie might wish; and as Mr. Grant had supplied him with plenty of money for all such purposes, he proposed to begin at He and Elvie would make a list, he said, and as soon as they returned to the village they would buy the things and have them sent up. Mr. Justin said that it would be better that he should send for them. Quimbo might take down what is called sometimes a box-sleigh, — which consists of a strong and good sized box mounted upon a sled-like sleigh bottom; such as the farmers use to take their produce to market in. Elvie liked this idea very much. He would ride in this market box with Quimbo, and leave August to drive the tavern sleigh by himself. He could imagine that he was a farmer going to market,—only that he would be going with a view of purchasing goods of the village traders, instead of selling them produce.

The question in regard to which August and Elvie were most in doubt was that of painting the wood work of the room. This would delay their getting possession of it for a day or two, but would make it much more pleasant as a place for Elvie to study in, and they knew moreover that it would gratify Fan very much to have her room painted. This last consideration seemed very important from Elvie's point of view. One coat of paint might be put on, August thought, that afternoon; and this coat he supposed would be dry enough to take a second coat on Monday morning, so that Elvie could have full possession of the room by Wednesday morning of the next week. In the 15*

meantime Mrs. Justin could put a cot bed for August at any time in the back passage way, which was to be his sleeping place, and she said she could put Elvie into the "spare room," as she called it—which was the room reserved for company—for a night or two. Elvie thought that this arrangement would answer perfectly well.

"The only difficulty is," said August, "to provide for your studies in the meantime. We ought to begin fair and square—both of us—on Monday morning."

"Well," said Elvie eagerly, "I can study by the kitchen fire on Monday and Tuesday—just as well as not—if grandmamma will only let me have a little table."

Mrs. Justin, who was quite pleased to find Elvie unconsciously adopting Fan's mode of designating her—implying as it did a kindly and affectionate feeling toward her on his part—said he could have a table just as well as not.

"And then," added Elvie, "I shall be all ready there for grandmamma to hear my loud reading."

Mrs. Justin said she would like to hear it very much.

And so it was all settled that the room should be painted. Deacon Justin offered to attend to the business of seeing that the painting was done, but August and Elvie preferred to attend to it themselves. Indeed August thought it would be useful to Elvie, as a means of promoting his progress in gaining health and strength, to have some driving about to do; while the work of selecting the articles and making the purchases would tend to develop and strengthen his judgment, and enable him to gain some useful knowledge in respect to business.

So the arrangement was made that the boys were to stop, on their way back to the village, at a painter's shop, at the lower mills, and engage

the painter to go up as soon as possible and put the first coat upon the wood work of the room. They were then to proceed to the village, and at once commence making the purchases of the different articles of furniture that would be required,—leaving each one, when purchased, to be called for in the afternoon. They were then to go to the tavern to dinner, and after dinner were to settle their bill and pack their trunks. It was also arranged that Quimbo, after his dinner at Deacon Justin's, should harness a pair of horses to the box-sleigh, and go down and call for August and Elvie at the hotel, and then go around with them and gather the articles of furniture which had been engaged, and take all together up the valley.

This plan was accordingly carried into execution. Quimbo came at the appointed time, and then the three boys went around to the different stores where the purchases had been made, and

taking the several articles, they packed them snugly and compactly in the box-sleigh. There was a bureau, a case of hanging shelves, a looking-glass, a table, three chairs, a very goodsized stove. This stove was in the shape of an open fire place, with doors by which it might be closed in front when desired. There were also various other things, too numerous to mention. There were so many of these articles, in fact, that the box-sleigh would not take them all in one load, and so it was arranged that Quimbo should go up with a part of them first, and then come back for a second load, while August and Elvie remained in the village to complete their purchases.

The afternoon was pretty well passed away when Quimbo returned for his second load, but August and Elvie were all ready for him, and the remaining articles—which were less bulky than those of the first load—were soon compactly

stowed in the box. Quimbo mounted upon the top of the load, making for himself the most comfortable seat there that he could, while August and Elvie sat forward on the driver's seat. Thus in due time they arrived safely at Deacon Justin's, after quite a pleasant ride up the valley.

The day was calm and sunny, and the road was in excellent condition, and Elvie took more pleasure in the ride through that rural valley in the loaded box-sleigh than a drive in the most elegant and fashionable turn-out in the Park in New York would have afforded him;—so true it is that happiness depends much less upon the outward circumstances themselves than upon the interpretation that the mind puts upon them, or rather the significance which it gives them.

The furniture thus taken up to Deacon Justin's the boys packed snugly in the shed at a place near the foot of the back stairs, ready to be

As soon as it was all thus bestowed, Elvie and August went up-stairs to see how the painter was going on with the work of painting the room. Somewhat to their surprise, and much to their joy, they found that the painter had brought an apprentice boy with him to aid in the work, and they together had just finished putting on the first coat over all the wood work in the room, and that it had improved the appearance of the room very much indeed.

There was another agreeable surprise for the boys the next day, for the mail brought the promised letter from Elvie's father, and in this letter Mr. Grant confirmed fully what he had said in the telegram in regard to the furnishing of Elvie's room, but was much more full and particular as to details. Mr. Grant wished that the room should not only be painted, but that the walls should be papered, and that Fan's taste

should be consulted in the selection of the paper. He also said he wished that August would procure a carpet for the floor, and that he should tell Fan that the carpet was to remain on the floor for her, when Elvie went away. As to the furniture—the bureau, the chairs, the table, the looking-glass and the other moveable articles—Mr. Grant said in his letter that he would give directions as to the disposal of them, when the time should come for Elvie to leave Mr. Justin's and return to New York in the spring.

This letter of Mr. Grant's was addressed to Elvie and not to August; though it contained many directions which were for August's guidance. Elvie was much pleased with this, and was specially pleased with his father's ending his letter by saying that he was very glad to find that Elvie was becoming so much of a man of business as he was shewn to be by his having the energy and perseverance to write so full and

satisfactory a letter, at a time when he must necessarily have had so many things to divert his thoughts and to make it difficult for him to give his attention to any serious and connected work.

"He ought to praise you for that, and not me," said Elvie, "for I should not have written the letter if it had not been for you."

"Oh no," said August. "I do not deserve the credit of it. You wrote it of your own accord.

All I did was to give you my advice."





CHAPTER XII.

The Art of Adding.

T is a curious fact that many persons go on in the practice of adding numbers more or less every day, and yet never learn to add fast, or easily, or certainly, all their lives—and all because they do not do it in the right way. Though they may have added up little shopping accounts, for example, a thousand times, until at length they are forty years old, whenever a new account is handed to them, of articles which they have bought in a store, they try to foot up the column, but they get puzzled and perplexed, and are in the end never sure that they are right. Indeed it often happens that they cannot make the footing come twice alike. So they get discouraged and vexed, and wish there were no such things as figures in the world.

And this is not because they have not had practice enough to learn to add rapidly and well, but because their practice has not been of the right kind. They have been all the time on the wrong road, and so are not getting near the end of their journey. That is, they count instead of adding.

What I mean is this. When they wish to add 7 and 8 for example, they have not had it fixed in their minds that the sum is 15, and that 17 and 8 are 25, and 37 and 8 are 45, and that in all cases where a 7 and an 8 are to be added the last figure will always be a 5,—but they have to count, either by drumming with their fingers, or by saying over, either mentally or in a whisper, all the intervening numbers, generally dividing them into groups of threes or twos, thus: seven,

eight—nine—ten; eleven—twelve—thirteen; fourteen—fifteen. They have to go over this process of adding the separate units which form the eight, one by one,—naming the amount in each step—instead of adding the eight as a whole, and saying once for all 15,—or 25,—or 35,—as the case may be.

Persons who have been accustomed all their lives to add in this counting way, acquire astonishing dexterity in running over upon their fingers, or in mentally enumerating in words, all the intermediate steps,—but it is a long and round about process, and can never be made anything else, however dexterously a person may learn to run through it. And a person who once gets upon this track seldom or never of his own accord gets off from it. Though he may have counted up all the units in 8 to be added to a number ending in the figure 7, a thousand times, he never seems to observe that it will always produce the number of the next decade ending in 5, but counts it all over with his fingers or in his mind, on every new occasion, just as if he had never met with that combination before, and could not tell without counting over again what the result would be.

A decade is a set of ten. The numbers from 20 to 30 constitute a decade, and those between 30 and 40 form the next decade. When therefore we have a number in any decade ending in 7, as for example 27, 37, 47 and the like, and wish to add 8, the answer will always be the number in the next decade ending in 5; that is 27 with 8 added will make 35, and 37 will make 45. Of course when this is once fixed in the mind, and has become perfectly familiar, there is an end once for all of the tedious counting above described, and the true result will come to the mind at once. And it is the same with all the other combinations.

August had perhaps had some vague idea of these two different methods of adding as practiced by different persons, but had never thought much of the difficulty of getting out of the wrong method when one has got into it, until Mr. Grant explained it to him, in one of the conversations he had with him in respect to Elvie.

"This is so important," said Mr. Grant, "that I shall be perfectly satisfied with Elvie's progress in arithmetic for this winter, if you only get him on the right track in simple addition. It is not how far along he has got in any book, that I shall inquire about. What I wish for is simply that he should learn to add without any counting. If I examine him in arithmetic, when he comes back, I shall simply do it by giving him a reasonable column of figures to add up, and observing whether he adds each number as a whole, or stops to count up the units of which it is composed."

In consequence of these and other similar instructions which he had received from Elvie's father, August had formed his plan for carrying Elvie forward in arithmetic, not by pushing him on to more and more difficult rules in the book, but only by giving him plenty of practice in adding numbers—taking care to put him on the right track as to the method of doing it, and to keep him on it. And the system that he adopted was this, to explain to him fully the difference between the two methods, so that he should know what he was about, and be interested himself in avoiding the habit of counting,—and then directing him to set himself sums, consisting at first only of such figures as he could easily add without counting, and gradually to advance to larger ones as fast as he learned to add the larger ones in the same way—that is without counting. And he aided him in learning how to manage the larger ones, by certain conversations that he had with him, when they were walking, or riding, or were sitting together having nothing special to do. These conversations managed for the purpose of communicating instruction, August called his talk-lessons, and he made it a rule to have a talk-lesson of half an hour, or two or three talk-lessons amounting in all to half an hour—every day.

To show exactly how these talk-lessons were managed, I will give an example of one of them which he gave Elvie on Saturday evening—the evening of the day on which the boys first took up their residence at Deacon Justin's. Deacon Justin himself, and his wife, had gone out to make an evening call, leaving nobody at home in the kitchen, but August and Elvie, and also Quimbo and Fan. August and Elvie were sitting on a settle at one side of the fire. Quimbo was in a large arm-chair at the other side, seeming to be half asleep,—though he was

really listening very attentively to August's lesson-talk. He did not dare to appear to be listening, for fear that August should ask him some questions that he could not answer. He was desirous to learn, but not willing to appear not to know. They labour always under great disadvantage, who try to learn while wishing to conceal the fact that they do not know.

As for Fan she was running about the room at play, going however frequently to the fire where she had some apples roasting on the hearth.

On hearing the word decade which August pronounced once or twice in his talk-lesson, while she was turning her apples, she ran to August and wanted to know what a decade was, and whether it was anything good to eat.

"Oh run away now, Fan," said Elvie, "we are busy talking about our lessons."

"Never mind," said August. "We will let her learn to."

So he asked Fan to hold out all the fingers of both her hands and then told her that there was a decade.

"No," said she. "That's nothing but my fingers."

"Yes," said August, "ten of them; and a decade is a ten. Go and get Quimbo to count your fingers and see if there are just ten of them—fingers and thumb and all. If there are not, you must have lost some of them."

"No," said Fan, "I'm going to watch my apples." So she ran off to the fire to make a new observation in respect to the progress of her apples in getting roasted.

"A decade is a set of ten," said August, resuming his conversation with Elvie. "In the series of numbers in Arithmetic the first decade is from one to ten; the second from ten to twenty. The twenties make the third—the thirties the fourth, and so on. Now when you

add a 9 to any number in any decade the amount will be a number one less in the next decade."

"I don't think I understand it very well," said Elvie.

"Why, suppose you add 9 to 27 which is the number ending in 7 in the decade of twenties. The answer would be 6 in the decade of therties. That is it will be the number one less in the next decade above. Suppose you add 9 to 48 what will it be according to that principle?"

"It will be 57," said Elvie without hesitation.

August then went on with a great number of examples, which he gave to Elvie in order to make the principle perfectly familiar to him. Of course Elvie hesitated a little at first, and he even made some mistakes; but he soon became so familiar with the method that he could answer at once, whatever the number was to which the 9 was to be added.

After practicing him thus with single numbers he gave him a continued series thus:

- "How much is 17 and 9?"
- "Twenty-six," said Elvie.
- "And 9 more?"
- "Thirty-five."
- "And 9 more?"
- "Forty-four." And so on.

August also taught him that this principle would enable any boy to repeat the line of nines in the multiplication table, by deducing each step from the preceding one. For if 2 times 9 are 18, 3 times 9 must be the number one less than 8 in the next decade, which would be 27; and 4 times 9 would be 36; and so on with all the rest.

The knowledge of this principle helps the pupil very much in learning that part of the multiplication table,—though it does not in itself give him that complete command of it which it

is necessary that every good arithmetician should have. For it is not sufficient that we should be able to deduce at once every individual product from the one preceding. To be able to multiply rapidly we must know every product by itself, without any reference to the others. The principle above explained will however afford the intelligent boy or girl great help in the work of learning them all.

"So now you see," said August, at the close of his conversation with Elvie on this subject, "that you can always add a 9 when it comes in any column, without counting up the separate units that compose it. You can also add all the twos and threes, and perhaps many others. And when you come to any that you don't know, as for instance 7 and 8, you must not count up, but must look into the addition table, and when you find that 8 and 7 make 15 you must say it aloud to yourself a number of times, and repeat it also

in the other decades, as 28 and 7 make 35, and 48 and 7 make 55. And so when the figures are reversed, 27 and 8 make 35, and 58 and 7 make 65. That is whenever a 7 or an 8 are to be added to a number of any decade ending in 8 or 7, the answer will always be the number in the next decade ending in 5. When this is once well fixed in the mind there will never afterwards, as long as the person lives, be any necessity for counting up the units one by one for that combination, whereas without that knowledge he will go on counting as long as he lives, whenever he comes to an 8 and a 7 to be added, thus he will say: '27 and 8 make,—let us see; 28-29-30, 31-32-33, 34-35,'—drumming all the time on the table or the desk, to keep the right reckoning."

I have explained this so fully because I am very desirous that these books should be useful to the readers of them, as well as entertaining,

and be the means of helping them forward in their studies, and of implanting in their minds useful principles of moral conduct. But I have no doubt that a great many young and giddy readers will skip this chapter when they see so many figures and other signs of arithmetic in it, just as Fan ran off to watch her apples; and so will go on counting laboriously and tediously all their lives perhaps, notwithstanding my attempt to help them in a better way. Still, there will be some, I am sure, who will read the chapter attentively, and will learn the lesson that it is intended to teach, and take pains to put a stop as soon as possible to the practice of counting when doing the work of addition, and learn from the addition table or in other ways, as soon as they can, what sum each different combination of the nine digits makes, and so release themselves from the intolerable drudgery of having to count them up anew, which will otherwise continue to be a burden to them as long as they live.



CHAPTER XIII.

Glad of an Excuse.

THE reader will perhaps suppose that if an account is to be given in this chapter of anybody's being glad of any excuse, it would be likely to be Elvie and not August. But the contrary is the fact. It was August who said Sunday evening that he was glad that he and Elvie had a good excuse for not performing their duties in the way of study the next day,—though it is true that the view he took of the subject was not exactly the usual one.

It was at night, when Elvie had gone to bed, in the spare room, that August had a brief conversation with him on the subject. During

the day Timothy and Quimbo had harnessed two sleighs—a single and a double one—to take all the family down to the village to church, —or to "meeting," as they called it. There was a Sunday-school at noon between the two services, which both August and Elvie attended. Elvie was much interested in the various scenes and incidents which attracted his attention during the day,—such as were connected with the rides down and back, and the new and strange aspect presented by the interior of the church and the appearance of the congregation, so different from what he had been accustomed to see in and near New York.

After church the family returned to the farm by a very pleasant ride up the valley, and August and Elvie helped Quimbo to unharness the horses and put them in their places in the stable, and also to give a fresh supply of hay to the sheep and the cattle, and to make them all

comfortable for the night. About nine o'clock in the evening, after family prayers, Timothy and Quimbo went out again with the lanterns—August and Elvie accompanying them—and gave the stock one more feeding to last them through the night. On returning to the house, Elvie went to the spare room where he had slept the night before, and after he had had time to undress himself and to be comfortably settled in bed, August went in to see that he was all right,—and to have a little talk with him according to his custom.

He first read a few verses from the Bible, and a prayer out of Elvie's prayer-book, as was a frequent custom with him. Indeed the foundation and main support of August's desire to do his duty in all things, and to do all in his power to lead other persons to do theirs, was his wish to please and obey God, and to lead others to please and obey Him. After this service he

waited to talk with Elvie a little about the plans for the next day.

"Now, Elvie," said he, "we have been planning to begin our studies to-morrow, but I think we have a perfectly good excuse for not beginning to-morrow, and I'm glad of it."

Elvie's eyes brightened at hearing these words
—partly with pleasure at the idea of postponing
the commencement of his studies, and partly
with something like surprise, for it was something new to hear August talk of being "glad of
an excuse" to release him from the performance
of any duty whatever.

"You see," continued August, "the man will come to-morrow morning perhaps to put on the second coat of paint. Then there is the carpet to buy and the paper to choose, and the man to engage to put the paper on. Then there ought to be a wood box to keep wood in, and I might make it to-morrow in the shop."

"Is there a shop here?" asked Elvie.

"Oh yes," said August; "an excellent shop, with all the necessary tools, and a good supply of pieces of seasoned boards on a loft over head."

"And then besides," continued August going on with his vindication of the goodness of the excuse, "you won't have any convenient facilities for doing your work in the kitchen. Carrying on school work without any teacher or any classmates, in a farmer's kitchen, is what you might call the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties."

Here August paused a moment, and Elvie's mind was wandering with delight among the scenes that he pictured to himself to be enjoyed during the day,—going up and down to his room watching the progress of things there—rambling about in the stables and barns with Quimbo—helping him in getting the sled ready to go to the woods—and perhaps going with him.

"So you see," continued August, "if we have the resolution to go steadily on with our duties during the forenoon, we shall have the satisfaction of thinking at noon that we were manly enough to do our work though we should have had a very good excuse if we had neglected it."

This last remark disturbed a little the reveries in which Elvie had been indulging. It seemed to indicate that it was not August's idea that the work should be postponed or neglected, after all.

"You see," continued August after a short pause, "there are three kinds of men in regard to their faithfulness in doing their duty or fulfilling their engagements. One kind are entirely negligent and careless. They do what they have to do, or not, just as it happens—without troubling themselves at all about their promises or their obligations. Another kind make it a point to do what they have engaged to do,

unless they have a really good excuse for not doing it."

"Yes," said Elvie, "that's the right way to do."

"And there is a third kind," continued August,

"who always make it a point to do what they
have to do, or what they have engaged to do if

it is a possible thing, whether they have a good
excuse or not."

"That's better still," said Elvie.

"Suppose for example," continued August, "that you have a pair of skates to be rigged."

"My skates are rigged already," said Elvie.

"Yes," replied August, "and so it is only a supposition. You take your skates to one man—a saddle and harness maker—and ask him how soon he can have them done. He says, 'Day after to-morrow.' As soon as you are gone he throws the skates down in a corner, and thinks no more about them. When you go for them on the appointed day he tells you they

are not done, but don't seem to think anything at all of his having broken his engagement, but only says, 'I forgot all about them. You come again in a few days.' And when you go again in a few days it is altogether a matter of chance whether they will be done then or not."

- "I hate such a man as that," said Elvie.
- "I don't know about hating the man," said August—"but it is right to hate such doings."
 - "That's what I mean," said Elvie.

"Another man, when you take the skates to him," continued August, "promises them the next day but one: and he would in fact have had them ready at that time, but he was not well the next day, and did not feel like work— or he had some other work that was very important to do that unexpectedly came in—or he had to go away in the afternoon with his wife to see her sick father—and thus he had very good excuses for not rigging the skates. So

when the boy comes for the skates at the appointed time he says that he is very sorry, but that he has been prevented from doing as he promised by things that he could not help."

"Well," said Elvie, "I don't think that he was very much to blame."

"No," replied August. "He was not. But there is another kind of man still. Such a man when a boy brought him the skates appointed a time when he said they would be done. The day before this appointed time he was called away from home, and did not return till late in the evening; and then he told his wife that he had an hour's work to do in his shop before he could go to bed. His shop you see was in the front part of his house. He said he had promised to have a pair of skates rigged for a boy early the next morning, and he was bound to have them done. She tried to persuade him not to do any such thing. He had been busy all day.

she said, and was tired and ought to go to bed. But he said no. He must go and do the work. She said it would do just as well if the skates were done by noon of the next day. And besides it was only a boy. He need not make so much of a small boy. He said that it was not the boy that he was making much of, but his promise. 'It is my promise,' says he, 'that I'm thinking of: though I think of the boy too. I want that boy, and all the boys in town, to know that when I promise that any work will be done, it will be done,—blow high, or blow low."

"That's the kind of man that I like," said Elvie eagerly starting up in his bed.

"Do you mean that that is the kind of man that you like to deal with, or the kind of man that you would like to be?" asked August.

"Why—why—both," said Elvie. "When I make a promise I like to keep it."

"So you do," replied August. "When you make any promise to me I can always trust you to keep it as well as I can any boy I know."

"But then," said Elvie, "we have not made father any promise about our studies for tomorrow."

"That's a fact," replied August, "and so you are not bound in that way."

"Unless indeed,"—he added after a moment's pause,—"we consider that there is a sort of implied promise."

"What do you mean by that?" asked Elvie.

"Why, there was an understanding," replied August, "when we came away from New York, that we would get settled here in the valley without any unnecessary delay, and that we would commence our course of study as soon as we conveniently could."

" Conveniently," repeated Elvie.

"Yes," said August; "and I admit that it is

not exactly convenient for either of us to begin our work to-morrow. But we can do it, if we choose;—and I am going to begin mine. You can do just as you think best about yours. I shall not think you do anything wrong if you postpone your beginning till you get settled in your room, and spend your mornings in the mean time in playing about, and seeing what is going on."

"Which do you advise me to do?" asked Elvie.

"Why, the truth is," replied August, "that I don't like to advise you at all,—for so far as I influence you to do your work to-morrow instead of spending the day in play, I diminish the satisfaction you will gain in doing it yourself, of your own accord. I am perfectly willing that you should either wait till your room is ready before you begin your studies, or that you should begin to-morrow in the kitchen in spite of the

difficulties,—whichever you think will afford you most satisfaction. Only if you do begin to-morrow I would rather that it should be your own work, and that you should feel that the credit of it belongs entirely to you, instead of its being in any sense my doing. But you need not decide to-night. You can wait till to-morrow, and make up your mind when you are coming back from the village after taking me down to the Academy."

"Then you have positively decided to begin your school to-morrow," said Elvie.

"Yes," said August, "I think that will be the best plan for me. I always find it is best for me, if I have anything to do, to take hold at once and do it,—promise or no promise. But your case is different."

"How different?" asked Elvie.

"Why, you are younger than I am," said August," and have more time before you, and you need play more. And then if I am going to the academy, the sooner I get under way in my classes the better. I shall have so much the less catching-up to do."

"Well," said Elvie, after a moment's reflection.

"I'll think about it. But tell me what the man did about rigging the skates."

August had told Elvie already that the case of the three men employed to rig skates was only imaginary—a mere supposition, which he had made to illustrate what he was saying; still Elvie had in his own mind invested the supposition with some semblance of reality, and he wished to have the story brought to its proper completion.

"He went into his shop," said August in answer to Elvie's inquiry, "started up a little fire in the stove, lighted his lamp and went to work. In about an hour the work was done. He wrapped up the skates in a paper, tied them

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with a string, and laid them aside. Then after putting everything in order he returned to his room in the house and went to bed perfectly contented and satisfied. The next morning, immediately after breakfast, the boy came for his skates. 'Are my skates done?' says he. 'Yes,' says the man. 'There they are.' 'I knew they would be done,' says the boy, 'for y always do just what you promise.'"

"Is that story true?" asked Elvie, after a moment's pause,—speaking however in a somewhat sleepy tone.

"No,—not exactly," replied August. "That is, it is not an account of any one particular case that I know of, but it is an example of thousands of cases substantially like it, that are happening every day. In that sense it is true."

"Have you got—any good place—to sleep—to—?" said Elvie. It was very plain that he was growing more and more sleepy.

"Oh yes," said August. "An excellent place. Mrs. Justin has put me up a little cot-bed, and a curtain to curtain off the passage way, and that makes a nice little chamber for me, with room for my trunk, and a place for me to put up some hooks to hang my clothes upon and all. When I want to read or study I suppose you'll let me sit by your fire."

Elvie did not answer. .

"Good night, Elvie," said August in an undertone,—"if you are not asleep."

No answer.

"Good night any how," said August, "whether you are asleep or not."

And so he went away.





CHAPTER XIV.

Study Hours.

THE next morning the weather looked threatening as if a snow-storm was coming on.

"I suppose if it storms you won't go," said Elvie to August, as he—that is Elvie—was dressing himself; for August had risen early and had gone out to the barn before it was light, to help take care of the cattle, and had then gone in to Elvie's room to see that he was all right.

"I shall set out," said August, "and go as far as I can."

"Suppose there should be such a big snowstorm this winter that Deacon Justin would not be willing to let you have the horse and sleigh?" "Then perhaps I should not go," said August.

"It is not best to do anything foolish just to show how smart we are. But there will be no such trouble this morning. It is at the end of great snow-storms, and not at the beginning of them, that there is any difficulty in getting about."

Deacon Justin's family breakfasted at seven o'clock, by candle light, at this time of the year. Family prayers were attended just before breakfast. After breakfast everybody was busy about the farm for an hour in "doing the chores," as they called it. The cattle were to be fed and watered, the stalls and tie-ups were to be put in order, teams were to be yoked up and horses harnessed for the day's work, and many other such things to be done. At a quarter past eight the sleigh which was to take August to the village, and Fan to her school, was driven to the door, and August, Elvie and Fan took their places in it and drove away.

As it was not a warm and sunny morning, such as makes a sleigh ride pleasant, Fan decided not to go to the village, but was left at her school-room door, and August and Elvie went on.

'Then you are not going to give me any advice about my studies this forenoon?" said Elvie, as they drove along down the valley.

"No," said August, "not as to the question whether you shall study or not. But I will give you some advice about the way of doing the work profitably in case you yourself decide to do it."

"Well," said Elvie, "go ahead."

"My first advice to you," said August, "is not to spend_your time in practising anything except what you want to learn."

"Why, nobody would do that?" said Elvie.

"Yes," said August. "I have known children to practise rubbing out figures on a slate. I advise you when you are setting yourself a sum, after you have once made a figure to let it stand, and not waste your time in rubbing it out so as to get room to make it over again."

"But I may want to make it better," said Elvie.

"You can make the next one better," rejoined August, "but the time you spend in rubbing out one that you have already made is all lost."

"It only takes a minute," said Elvie.

"True," replied August, "only a minute for one, but if there are a great many figures to be rubbed out, it takes a great many minutes. I have known foolish children, when they are setting themselves sums, to spend about half their time in rubbing the figures out and making them over again. So I advise you never to rub out a figure in any case for the sake of making it better. Make it carefully the first time and let it stand."

"If it is in the answer, and is wrong," said

Elvie, "then we must rub it out."

"Yes," said August, "you must rub it out perhaps if it is wrong, but you ought to box your ears first for punishment for making it wrong."

"Oh August!" exclaimed Elvie laughing.

"Do you think," said August, "that the way to do work in arithmetic is first to set down any figure that comes into your head, and then calculate and see if it is right, and if it is not rub it out and write another one in its place? No, indeed. That's no way. See that your figure is right first,—and then set it down. In this way you'll have no rubbing out to do."

"That's true," said Elvie. "But we must make mistakes sometimes."

"Yes," rejoined August, "but it is only from haste and carelessness generally that we do it; and if you box your ears, or give yourself a little scolding every time you do it, you will soon get

into the habit of being careful to determine what a figure ought really to be before you write it down.

"Then there is another way," continued August, "that you will be in great danger of wasting time, and that is in choosing something to copy in your writing hour."

"I have not got my copy-book out," said Elvie, "and I can't get it out very well till I unpack my trunk."

"Your object is to learn to write, and not to make a book, and you can do that by practice upon a sheet of paper as well as in a book. Take a sheet of paper, and copy carefully upon it for half an hour something from a book, or a newspaper. And don't spend any time in looking over different things to choose what you shall copy. Take the first book that comes to hand and begin to copy the first passage you open to.

You can learn correctness in spelling, punctuation, capitals and all such things just as well by one thing as by another. And above all do not turn your half-hour glass till you are ready to begin the actual writing, so as to have the whole half-hour for improving practice."

In this and in other similar conversation the time passed rapidly away until the boys arrived at the village. They had one or two errands to do on business connected with the furnishing of the room, and had also to call at the post-office. Then they drove to the academy where Elvie left August, and he himself returned up the valley to his new home.

As perhaps the reader will have already anticipated, Elvie had resolved to commence his studies resolutely that day. Accordingly as soon as he arrived at the farm he delivered the horse to Quimbo's care, after waiting a few minutes to help unharness him, and then went into the house.

A small table and a chair near the fire for him. She was herself engaged at work in a back room with a woman from somewhere in the neighborhood who came to help her on Mondays. She however assisted Elvie to take off his coat and mittens, and told him she was very glad that he was going to study in her kitchen.

"I only wish that Fan was here to study with you," said she.

"Oh, Fan could not study at home," said Elvie.

"Why not?" asked Mrs. Justin.

"She could not sit still long enough," said Elvie.

The moment after these words were uttered. Elvie was almost sorry that he had spoken them; for his having expressed such an opinion of Fan's instability and want of self-control would make it doubly disgraceful in him to fail

in doing his own work faithfully. So he resolved that he would not fail, and immediately commenced his preparations in earnest.

"I'll see how long it takes me to get to my work," said he, glancing up at the tall kitchen clock that was ticking in a corner of the room. It was just ten minutes to ten. He went up immediately to his own room, and glanced in for a moment to see that the painter and his boy were at work, but did not stop to watch their progress. Then he returned to the spare room where he had slept and where his trunk had been placed, opened his trunk, took out his slate, his arithmetic, his travelling inkstand, a portfolio containing paper, his gold penwhich was contained in a silver handle into which it could be shut to protect the point, and was made to fit into a little morocco case—and his half-hour glass. With these he went back to his place in the kitchen, arranged the things on

the table, opened the arithmetic to the place where a number of sums in addition were set down, took the slate and pencil, and when he was all ready to begin he looked up at the clock again.

"Good," said he. "It is five minutes to ten.
All my preparations have only taken up five
minutes!"

He then turned the half-hour glass to set the sand to running, and began his work. He set down sum after sum, which he copied from his book, and then added up the columns one after another,—taking great care to avoid counting as much as he possibly could, and setting down the results in order below. Having thus added all the columns from above downward and written the amounts below, he added each one again from below upward, and wrote the second answer below the first one, so as to see if the two answers corresponded. They did not

always correspond, but when they did not he did not rub them out, but let them stand as they were, contradicting each other. It may be a question whether he did right in this, or whether he ought to have gone over the columns again till he could make them agree. The plan that he adopted had this advantage at any rate, namely, that August, in looking over his work afterward, could see exactly to what degree of exactness in adding, his pupil had attained—for all the mistakes that he made were faithfully preserved.

At the end of his half-hour, that is when the sands were all run out from his sand-glass, he felt somewhat tired. He turned the sand-glass down upon its side and rose from his seat to take a little rest. He thought he would go up stairs and see how the painting went on. He found it was going on very nicely. Indeed the work was almost done, and Elvie was half inclined to stay and see it finished.

"He said I could do just as I pleased about studying this morning," said he to himself—in recollecting August's conversation with him,— "and of course if I could omit the whole of my studies I could omit a part of them.

"No," said he again after a moment's reflection. "I have done one half-hour of work, and I'll go on and do the rest."

So he went back to the kitchen and took his place at the table once more.





CHAPTER XV.

Getting Settled.

CCORDING to the plan of study which August had formed for Elvie, his next half-hour was to be spent in reading aloud from a simple story book, with a view not to obtaining any useful instruction, but only to acquire the art of reading aloud skilfully and well, that is in such a way as to convey the whole meaning of what he read in a plain, distinct and forcible manner, to any one who might be listening to If he could have any one to listen to his reading it would be so much better, August had said, as the interest he would feel in conveying to his hearers the whole import of what he read

would have an insensible but powerful influence in assisting him to give the right emphasis to the important words, and the right tones and modulations to his voice.

Elvie did not however quite like to ask Mrs. Justin to hear his reading, as the book from which he was to read consisted of stories only such as would be likely to be interesting to boys and girls of his own age, still he thought he would venture to do it. Mrs. Justin was at the time sitting at the table near a window paring some apples to make an apple pudding for dinner. So when he was all ready to turn his sand-glass and begin, he told her that his next lesson was to read aloud for half an hour, and asked her whether his doing so would disturb her.

"Oh no, indeed," said Mrs. Justin. "I shall like to hear the story very much. It will amuse me while I am paring my apples."

So Elvie turned his glass and began. Of course he was now quite desirous of making the meaning of what he read very plain, so that Mrs. Justin should understand it perfectly. He succeeded so well in this that Mrs. Justin began very soon to be so much interested in what he was reading that she wished "grandmother," as she called her, to hear it too.

"Stop a minute," said she.

On hearing this Elvie immediately turned down his sand-glass upon one side so as to stop the flow of the sand during the time that he was interrupted. He was very honest, and did not wish to have any time counted except what was spent by him in actual reading.

"I should like grandmother to hear this story," said she. "It will amuse her. And then besides it will be a new story for her to tell to Fan. Fan is always wanting more stories, and grandmother likes to hear all she can to tell to her—though

sometimes she alters them a great deal in the telling. But that makes no difference. It is all the same to Fan."

So Mrs. Justin, after speaking to her mother about it, and finding that the old lady would like to hear the story very much, opened the door that led into her room, and placed Elvie's chair just inside of it, while she placed her own chair, and her basket of apples, and the other things necessary for her work, very near.

"Now, Elvie," said Mrs. Justin when they were all ready, "begin again, for grandmother will want to hear the story from the beginning."

Elvie thought to himself that he had no objection at all to beginning the story again so long as he was not obliged to turn the half-hour glass back, and begin the running of the sand again. He had a right, he thought, to all the sand that had run through while he was reading to Mrs. Justin; which was certainly true.

The aged grandmother seemed quite pleased to learn that the story was to be read so that she could hear it, and as she sat in her oldfashioned armrchair with her feet upon a soft foot-stool before her, and her knitting work in her hands, she listened attentively to Elvie as he read; and Elvie took pains to read slowly and distinctly, and in such a manner as to convey to her the full meaning of the narrative and the dialogue. He finished the story just about the time that his half-hour was out. Grandmother thanked him for reading to her such an interesting story, and told him she hoped that when he should be as old as she was, there would be some kind child to come and read to him.

"I can't read to myself," said she, "for I have not got the right kind of spectacles. But I'm going to have a new pair some day, and then I can read to myself again. And if not," she added after a moment's pause, "it won't be long

before I shall go where my eyes will be as bright as anybody's."

The good woman had been able to read to herself by means of her spectacles for many years, but her sight had gradually failed till she could see distinctly no more, and she thought the fault was in the spectacles.

After thus finishing the "reading half-hour" Elvie went back to his table in the kitchen, and went on with his other two half-hour sessions of study. He allowed himself a few minutes intermission between each half-hour, for rest, and for a brief visit to his room to see how the work was going on. Of course he did not set the sand to running in these cases until he came back and was ready to resume his work. When he had finished his four tasks he put every thing away in a drawer of the table, which Mr. Justin said he might use for this purpose, and then looking up at the clock he said:

"Good! It is just twelve o'clock. Time for Quimbo and Timothy to come home with their noon load."

So he put on his coat and cap, and went out into the yard. He found Quimbo was just coming with the load of wood up the lane. Elvie went down to meet him, and helped him to unload his wood and pile it in the yard. Soon after this Timothy arrived, and the horn was blown to call them all to dinner.

August had taken a good substantial luncheon with him, and was not to come home until two o'clock; for the hours of study at the Academy were from nine in the morning to two in the afternoon. This arrangement was made, instead of the usual one of two sessions a day, on account of the distance from which many of the pupils had to come from the farms and little villages up and down the valley. August liked this arrangement very well as it required him to go

and come only once, and gave him some time with Elvie at home. Then as he could always take a good luncheon with him to eat in the long recess, and as he always had a very substantial supper at six o'clock, at Deacon Justin's, it was all right for him in respect to food.

Things went on in this way very smoothly and pleasantly for several days, during which time the finishing and furnishing of Elvie's room was completed in a very perfect manner. The wood work was painted, the walls were papered, a carpet was put upon the floor, and the furniture was moved in. Elvie liked everything very much, and he especially liked the stove, which as has already been said was in the form of an open fireplace of iron, standing out near the front of the hearth, and having doors by which it could be closed in front when desirable.

When these doors were closed there were little openings that could be made below by

means of a slide, and when there was a fire in the stove and the doors were shut, and the slide open, the air would be forced in quite swiftly from the room, to supply the vacancy within —or the tendency to a vacancy—produced by the draft in the chimney. People sometimes imagine in such a case that the air is drawn in through such openings by the action of some kind of force from within. But it is really forced in by the pressure of the air from without that is from the room;—the pressure within being diminished by the effect of the ascent of the warm air up the chimney while that in the room is maintained in full by the constant access of the external air to it through the key-hole and crevices, and other accidental channels of communication which cannot be wholly prevented in the most nicely finished rooms. Indeed it is fortunate that they cannot be prevented, for if a room were to be made absolutely air

tight on every side, with no opening except through the chimney, the smoke from a stove communicating with the chimney would not go up the flue, but would all come out into the room, and as soon as the room became filled with smoke and deadly gases—the products of the combustion—the fire would go out. But then by opening a window to let a supply of fresh air come in, and by its weight force the heated air from the stove pipe up the chimney, the fire would soon kindle itself up again.

Elvie was very much pleased with his stove, especially after August had explained to him the principle on which it operated, in respect to the draft, and the effects to be expected from the different modes of arranging the doors, slides, and dampers; and he amused himself in trying various experiments, at different times, to kindle up or accelerate, or deaden the fire as might be required.

He liked his room and all the arrangements of it very much indeed. It was not actually complete at once, it is true, for in the course of the week after he went into it he thought of several little additional conveniences which he required. He procured these from time to time, as the want of them occurred to him, without however interrupting on account of them the regular course of his studies from day to day, and he continued to spend two hours in his room, during the succeeding months of the winter, though he often went down during his reading half an hour to read his story aloud to grandmamma or to grandmother, and sometimes to both of them together.

And sometimes on stormy days when it seemed lonesome in his room he used to take his work all together down into the kitchen—and do his work at the little table by the kitchen fire. Mrs. Justin seemed to like to have him do this very much.

When it was very stormy, however, Fan did not go to school, and on such occasions she used to come and sit in Elvie's room, knitting or sewing, while he went on with his studies;—though it was necessary in such cases to adopt some special plans by way of precaution to prevent her interrupting him in his work. What these plans were will be explained perhaps in some future chapter.





CHAPTER XVI.

Memory Failing.

HAN'S grandmother was far advanced in life, and was much confined to her room, and even to her chair, but she was generally contented and happy. At her age persons are often happy in sitting still, with very little—as we should think—to amuse or occupy their minds, provided that they are only free from pain, and have nothing specially to trouble them. It was a great gratification however to Fan's grandmother to have Elvie come and read her a story. There were three reasons why it gratified her. First she was entertained herself by the story. Secondly it gave her a story to

tell—with variations it is true—to Fan; and thirdly,—and this perhaps was the principal source of the pleasure which Elvie's reading afforded—it gratified her very much that so young a boy as Elvie was should be willing to take so much pains on her account. That is one great advantage indeed which young persons have, for the younger they are, in some cases, the more pleasure they can give by their kindness to those who are aged, or sick, or in any trouble.

I have said that Fan's grandmother used to tell the stories to Fan with variations. The truth was that her memory was failing a good deal, so that she could not always remember the facts of the narrative just as they were brought to her mind by Elvie's reading; and then moreover, as she had been accustomed in former years to make up stories entirely, for the entertainment of children; she gradually fell

into the habit of taking any fact, or incident, or narrative which came to her knowledge in any way, as the basis of a tale for the amusement of her listeners, and to enlarge and embellish it in any way to make it more entertaining. There was no objection to this so long as there was no pretension on her part that the tales she related were historically true. Indeed her plan was attended with some great advantages, and I recommend it for trial to all older brothers and sisters who may read this book, and who may themselves be called upon from time to time to make up or to repeat stories for the amusement of the younger children.

For the sake of an example of the manner in which this old lady used to alter the stories, partly from the failure of her memory, and partly from her desire to make the narrative as entertaining as possible to Fan, I will here give the story of Dorinda's Kitten, in the two forms

in which it appeared—first as Elvie read it from his book, and then as it was afterward repeated to Fan by her grandmother.

DORINDA'S KITTEN.

As read by Elvie from his Book.

Once there was a girl named Dorinda. She had a doll and a kitten. The doll could talk, but the kitten could only mew.

When I say the doll could talk I mean she could say one word, and that word was ma ma. Even this word she could not speak very plainly, and she only spoke it when Dorinda squeezed her chest a little. Still she spoke it plainly enough for Dorinda to understand her.

Dorinda's kitten was a very pretty one too, and she named her Florinda. She wished her kitten to have a name as much as possible like her own, and as her own name was Dorinda, she thought she would call her kitten Florinda. She had a cage for her kitten made of a box covered with

a pretty wall paper, and with wires over the opening in front like the bars of a cage. There was a door in the side, for the kitten to go in and out, and a cushion on the top so that Dorinda could use the house as a seat for herself when she chose.

There was a bureau in the chamber where Dorinda used to play, and her mother gave her the lower drawer of this bureau to keep her doll's things in. A part of this drawer was filled with the doll's dresses, and other such things, and the other part was used as the sleeping place for the doll herself during the night. There was a small counterpane in the back side of the drawer which Dorinda used to draw forward and to cover her doll with, up to the chin,—after she had put her to bed.

One day Dorinda was playing with her kitten and her doll before this drawer, which as it happened, was open at the time. The kitten was playing about the floor. She had a pink and green ribbon around her neck, which was all the dress she ever wore. By and by she became tired of her play and so she crept into her house. "That's right," said Dorinda, "go into your house and lie down and go to sleep."

But Florinda did not stay long in her house, for Dorinda was continually moving about upon it in so restless a manner that she had no peace; and so she determined to go out and see if she could not find a more quiet place to take a nap. In looking about for such a place she saw that the drawer was open, so she thought she would go in and see what sort of a bed she could find there. Dorinda happened to be sitting with her back to the drawer about that time, and did not see her go in.

Florinda crept to the back side of the drawer to a place partly behind and partly under the counterpane, and saying to herself, "Yes this is a

nice quiet place"—she lay down and soon went to sleep.

It was on a summer afternoon, after tea, that all this happened, and when at length the sun began to go down Dorinda told her doll that it was time for her to go to bed.

"Florinda went to bed long ago," said she,

"and it is time for you to go." So she rose
from her seat, and lifted up the cover of the
cage or box, to show the doll that Florinda was
already in bed. But to her surprise there was
no kitten there.

"Why, dear me!" said she quite surprised.

"She has gone away somewhere. Where can she be gone?"

Then she turned again to Dorabella her doll, for that was the name she had given to the doll, and said:

"Never mind. I'll lay you down in your bed and go and find Florinda, and then I will come

and cover you up and put Florinda to bed, and then I will go to bed myself. Should you like that?"

Dorabella answered "Ma-Ma."

"That's right," said Dorinda. "That means Yes, mam-ma, and you are a good little girl for being so ready to go."

Although all Dorabella's answers were the same, namely ma-ma, and were only given when Dorinda squeezed her, yet Dorinda understood them in different ways, according to the kind of answers in each particular case, which the doll ought to give. This was an excellent plan as it saved the maker of the doll a great deal of trouble in his work; for the interior mechanism would have been necessarily very complicated to enable her to give all the different answers which would have been required in the many conversations that Dorinda held with her.

Dorinda placed her doll in the drawer, without

however disturbing Florinda who was still fast asleep herself, and went away to look for the kitten. She looked for her everywhere, up stairs and down stairs and in the kitchen. The kitten was nowhere to be found,—which was not at all surprising since the poor thing was fast asleep in the back part of the bureau drawer—wholly unconscious of the anxiety and trouble that her mysterious disappearance had occasioned.

In the meantime Dorinda, after looking everywhere for her kitten in vain, went to find her brother Ralph to ask him to help her. But Ralph was interested in looking at some pictures in a new picture book, and he began to shew them to his sister. In this way her attention was diverted from the lost kitten, and she thought no more, either about Florinda or the doll, till she became sleepy and was taken away to bed.

Her mother, as she was going through the room where the bureau was, some time after-

wards, seeing the drawer open pushed it in as she passed it, and put the cage in its place in the corner of the room.

Thus the kitten was shut up in the drawer as in a prison, for the night.

The next morning one of the first things that Dorinda thought of was her kitten, and as soon as she was dressed she recommenced her search. She soon found her brother, and persuaded him to help her. They together looked all over the lower part of the house, and in the kitchen, and in the shed, and even out in the yard, but nowhere was Florinda to be found.

All this time the poor kitten was mewing piteously in the drawer, for she was tired of her long confinement, and hungry for her breakfast, and so she was uttering plaintive mewings which was the only way she had of saying "I want to get out, I want to get out."

After searching everywhere in vain, Dorinda 21*

took Ralph up stairs to show him where the kitten was when she was last seen. Now it happened that the bureau stood with its back to a wall which was formed by the partition between the chamber and the entry, and as the children came up the stairs and passed along the entry their attention was suddenly attracted by the sound of the mewing.

- "Hark!" said Ralph. "There she is."
- "Where?" asked Dorinda, looking about eagerly.

The kitten hearing their voices began to mew again louder than before—as much as to say, 'Do let me out!'

"She is in the partition," said Ralph. "She has got in there somehow or other from the garret, and has fallen down. We must take off the base-board and let her out." *

^{*} The base-board is the board which may be seen along the lower side of the wall next to the floor in almost all rooms.

"I must go and get a hammer," said Ralph, after a moment's pause, "and take off the base-board, and then when we have got Florinda out, we will nail it on again."

So he went to get the hammer, but before he commenced his carpentering, his father came by and asked him what he was going to do. He said he was going to take a part of the house down to let the kitten out.

The sound it seems passed through the crevices in such a way as to make him think the kitten was in the partition.

His father listened. The kitten mewed again.

"Hear her, father!" said Ralph. "She is in there behind the board, and we must take off the board to get her out."

His father said nothing in reply to this, but at

It is placed there to prevent the plastering from being carried quite down to the floor, where it would be wet by the mop when the floor was washed, and soon made to crumble and come off. The board is on this account sometimes called the mop-board.

once went on and passed through the door into the chamber. He put his ear down near the end of the bureau. The kitten mewed again. He then gently and cautiously opened the lower drawer of the bureau, and to the great astonishment of the children, as soon as the opening was wide enough, the kitten jumped out with the greatest alacrity, darted toward the door, went out like a flash, and racing down-stairs three steps at a time, disappeared.

And that is the end of the story.

Such was the story as Elvie read it from the book. And now for the form in which Fan heard it from her grandmother, that evening, just before she went to bed. It will be seen that her grandmother did not get the account exactly right, for the way in which she related it was somewhat as follows:

The Story as it was related to Fan by her Grandmother.

Once there was a child named Flora and she had a doll named Bell. I believe their real

names were rather longer, but that is all that I can remember of them.

Bell was a very nice doll and could talk. The man that made her took a great deal of trouble with the contrivances inside, so that she could say anything that Flora wanted her to say. Flora had a house for her doll too, with an iron railing in front, and a door at the side for Bell to go in and out. She had a great many dresses too in a drawer. The prettiest of them was pink and green.

One night when it was time for Bell to go to bed, Flora asked her if she was sleepy; and she said, "Yes, ma-ma, yes, ma-ma." So Flora undressed her and put on her night-clothes, and then looked for the kitten, but the kitten had run away. So she laid down Bell in the drawer, and told her to lie still while she went to find her kitten. And Bell said, "Yes, ma-ma, yes, ma-ma."

Then Fan went to find her kitten. But she

could not find her anywhere. But Ralph had a picture book. So she thought she would take the picture book and go and show Bell the pictures. While she was doing it, Bell went to sleep, and Flora herself became sleepy: and by and by her mother came and shut up the drawer with Bell in it, and took Flora away and carried her to bed. And so Bell slept in the drawer all night.

But the kitten went rambling all about the house in the night, and finally went into the garret, and there while she was creeping about in the dark, she fel into a hole, and came down in the partition to a place opposite to where the bureau stood with Bell in the drawer. Here she began to mew for the people to come and let her out. But nobody came, and so she had to stay till morning. In the morning she began to mew again. And Bell waked up too, and began to call, "Ma-ma! Ma-ma! Come and let me out."

By and by the people came and listened, and the sounds came through the crevices as if both the kitten and the doll were in the partition. But Flora's father went round and opened the drawer and found Bell there, and Flora took her up and dressed her, and prepared her for breakfast; and the carpenter came and took off the mop-board, and as soon as it was off, the kitten dashed out and ran down-stairs as fast as she could go, and was never heard of more.

"And the moral of this story," continued the grandmother—for she always, if she could, deduced some moral or other from her stories—"is a warning to you and to all other little girls like you, never to go groping about in the night, in dark and frightful places, for fear you might fall into some hole."

"No, grandmother," said Fan, "I promise you I never will."

Such was the story in grandmother's rendering of it. Some time afterward Fan feeling a desire

to hear the story again, asked Elvie to read it to her, out of his book. But she did not like it nearly so well in that form as in the other. She said it was not nearly as pretty a story as he read it, as it was in the way her grandmother told it to her.





CHAPTER XVII.

Going into the Woods.

ATURDAY was a holiday at the Academy, and also at Fan's school, and of course both August and Fan were more at liberty on that day of the week, than on other days. August made it a holiday for Elvie too, by not requiring him to study in his room on that day. But August himself, though he did not go to his classes at the Academy, usually spent the forenoon on Saturday in Elvie's room, which he had then all to himself, and employed himself in reviewing what he had gone over during the preceding week, so as to make himself more perfectly master of what he had learned; or in working 22 .

out some of the problems in algebra or geometry which were to come in the lessons of the following week—thus facilitating his progress in the work that was before him. By pursuing this course he soon began to take a high rank in all his classes.

Elvie had been intending to take Fan with him some Saturday into the woods, and in order to prepare the way for such a visit from her to the wood-lot, he had made what he called a camp for her, where he could have a fire to keep her warm.

This camp was made as follows. Elvie first took a pole—which he made by cutting down a tall and slender tree, and then cutting off the top and using the stem for his pole—and placing it across from one evergreen tree to another, resting the ends of the pole among the branches. Then he cut off a great many other branches of spruce and hemlock trees, and laid them in a sloping

position from this pole to the ground, forming with them a kind of roof—the pole serving for the ridge, and the long branches, the rafters. This roof covered a space large enough for two or three persons to sit in—and for seats Elvie provided a great number of small soft hemlock boughs—the ends of the big branches. He also cleared a place in front of this hut for his fire, and gathered together a considerable quantity of dry and partially decayed wood, which of course was very combustible, for fuel.

On the first Saturday after he had finished these preparations he intended to propose to Fan to go down with him when he and Quimbo went down with the sled, and remain there with him in the hut, until the load was ready to come up again. But that morning proved to be very cold and windy, and Fan's grandmamma was almost afraid to let her go.

"There'll be no wind in the woods, I know,"

said she. "It is the going and coming that I am afraid of. The poor thing will freeze."

August said he thought that they could muffle her up well in buffalo robes and blankets, on the way, so as to protect her well from the wind.

"Yes, if you were going too," said Mrs. Justin,
"I should not have any fear."

Elvie then earnestly begged that August would go with them, and August finally consented on condition that while they were there Elvie should give him, out of his play time, fifteen minutes for three talk-lessons, five minutes for each.

"And what should Fan do all the time?" asked Elvie.

"She would have to sit still and listen," said August.

"Yes," said Fan, who was quite eager to have August go, as it was only on that condition that she could go herself. "Yes, I'll sit still and listen. I won't speak a word."

So it was settled that they all should go, and they immediately began to make their preparations.

While Fan with the help of her grandmamma was making herself ready in the house, August and Elvie went out into the yard to see about the best mode of conveyance for her. They found Timothy and Quimbo yoking up the oxen and attaching them to the sled. August asked Timothy if he was willing to take some passengers, and among them a young lady. Timothy said at once that he would take as many passengers down as wanted to go—and the more young ladies the better; but he could not promise much about bringing them back, for his sled would then be loaded with wood. He could not bring anything back but what he could take in tore.

August and Elvie were satisfied with this arrangement and so they proceeded to make 22*

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their preparations,—August taking the direction. They brought out a quantity of hay and made a kind of bed of it upon the board which formed the floor of the sled. Then they spread a buffalo robe over this hay, having first bundled up a portion of it under the buffalo, near one end, for a pillow. They laid another buffalo at the side to be used as a coverlid when Fan should be in her place.

"There!" said August, "that will be a good way to take her down into the woods. Now for a safe contrivance to bring her back."

So saying he brought a large framed sled, of the kind which the farmers generally use as a hand sled. Such a sled is considerably larger than those which the boys use for coasting, and has holes in the side bars for stakes. August put in the stakes, and also laid upon the sled some short boards. The use for which he intended these boards will appear by and by. Upon these boards he put a basket containing provisions for the camp. The basket was kept in its place by the stakes.

The sled, thus prepared, he fastened by its rope to a stake in the back part of the big sled.

"There!" said August, when this had been done. "You, Elvie, can ride on this sled in going down to the wood-lot if you please, but Fan must have it coming back."

"It will be big enough for Fan and me too," said Elvie.

When all was ready August went into the house and brought out Fan in his arms. She was of course well wrapped up—her face being nearly covered with a warm hood which came well forward over it. The wind was blowing almost a gale, but she was well protected from it, and did not care for it at all. August laid her down gently on the bed which he had prepared for her, and then spread the spare

buffalo over her, covering her with it all around her head, and up above her chin so that no opening was left except a small peep hole opposite her eyes. He tucked up her feet also well with the lower part of the buffalo.

"There!" said August. "You must play that you are a doll and that your mother has put you to bed and told you that you must shut up your eyes, and go to sleep."

"And must I really go to sleep?" asked Fan.

"No," said August, "not unless you get sleepy. It might be a good plan to shut your eyes a minute or two, when we start, just for play."

"All ready," asked Timothy who was standing near the head of the oxen.

" All ready;" responded August.

The great sled immediately began to move on, dragging the small sled after it. Elvie immediately jumped upon the small sled, to get a ride down upon that, while August and Timothy stood upon the large sled, each one steadying himself by a stake.

"Won't you come and ride here with me, August?" said Elvie. "There's room enough for us both."

"No," said August. "There is better air up

He might well say there was better air, or at least *more* air where he and Timothy were standing, for the wind was very keen and cold. It gradually abated however, as they descended the lane, though it increased again as they were crossing the pond. But when at length they entered the wood, it seemed to become suddenly calm. It is usually calm in the woods even when there is quite a high wind blowing in the open ground—the movement of the air being intercepted by the trees, where trees grow tolerably thick together, and especially where

there are groups of evergreen bushes growing among the larger trees.

Although the sled in entering into the wood was sheltered by the trees from the wind—which was blowing from the north-west—the sun shone in along the road—which fortunately entered the wood from the south—and made it comparatively warm and pleasant there. Fan, finding that the weather was for some cause or other moderating, began to put her head out from under its coverings.

Observing that the wind did not blow any longer she threw off the buffalo robe from her head and began to sit up. August then took his seat upon the hay by the side of her, both he and Fan leaning their back against a stake on the side, as they rode on.

"Elvie," said August, "did I ever tell you what the plan was of teaching the scholars to write composition, at the Academy?"

Elvie said he had not.

"Then I'll tell you now," said August. "You see scholars in school—and especially the younger ones—are always very unwilling to write composition. Indeed they generally make great complaint about it. This is partly because they have too many things to attend to at once. So at the academy they have different classes—or rather different grades of classes—so that the scholars shall only have one thing to learn at a time.

"The youngest class have nothing to do but to copy sentences out of books, just as they are printed in the books, till they learn to copy them correctly, with all the spelling, and punctuation, and capitals, just as they are in the book. That is what you are doing now in your half-hour of writing. Thus they have the thoughts given them, and the language, and the way of writing the words, and have nothing to do but copy them

right, so as to learn how to spell words and to place capitals and stops right, by imitation.

"In the next grade," continued August, "the classes have the sentences given them, but they do not see them written, and they have to find out the way to spell the words, and to place the capitals, and the stops, right themselves. You have not got to that grade yet, though as soon as you would like to try and see if you can do it, I will give you some lessons in that grade. The way they give the lessons in the Academy is to let the boys or girls take something that they know by heart, and let them see if they can write it correctly. I heard the teacher giving this to a class of girls for their exercise, one day:

Little Bo-peep has lost her sheep,

And don't know where to find them:

Let'm alone,

And they'll come home,

Wagging their tails behind them.'

The teacher told them they could all remember those lines, and they must write them carefully, making each line of the poetry a separate line on the paper, and beginning each line with a capital letter. They must also put a comma wherever there was a pause in the sense, and a period at the end.

They all then went to their seats and wrote, and then when they came to the class the next day bringing their papers, the teacher wrote the lines on the black-board as they ought to be written, explaining everything as he went on, while they all looked at their writings—each at her own—to see what mistakes they had made. They had pencils to correct their mistakes with, and then for the next lesson they were to make a new copy of the lines, with all the mistakes corrected, and these new and corrected copies they hand in for the teacher t examine."

"I should like to write such a lesson as that," said Fan—" about Little Bo-peep."

"Do you know any other poetry like that, that you could write?" asked August.

"I know about Jumping Jack," said Fan.

"What is it about Jumping Jack?" asked August.

"It is this," said Fan:

"Jumping Jack

Has a crick in his back.

And he jerks his legs and arms about.

"There is some more of it, but I don't know the rest."

"That's enough for a very good lesson," said August.

"Only I can't write it unless you hold my nand," said Fan.

"Well, I'll hold your hand," said August, "and we'll make a nice lesson of it for you."

At this point of the conversation the oxen stopped, having come to the place where the sled was to be loaded with wood.

"Good!" said August. " 1 mothy has stopped just in the right time, for we have just finished the first five minutes' lesson."

Elvie was surprised to hear this, and said he did not think that that would be called a lesson.

"Yes," said August, "it will be a very good lesson if you remember it, and are careful when you are copying from a book, and notice all the spelling, and punctuation, and especially if you remember the second, and third lessons, I am to give you by and by."





CHAPTER XVIII.

The Camp.

THE snow was pretty well trodden down all around the place where the sled stopped, for Timothy and Quimbo and the oxen had worked about there a good deal since the last snow had fallen; and besides, Elvie, in walking to and fro, and hauling the wood for his fire, had made a pretty good road to his camp. Still August-knowing very well that the chief difficulty with young persons, and especially with girls, in the woods in winter, is to keep the feet warm, and presuming moreover that Fan was not provided with such thick and stout boots as he and Elvie wore-took her up in his arms and carried her to the camp, while Elvie followed him with one of the buffalo robes. Elvie spread the robe over the seat of hemlock boughs which he had formed, and then placed Fan upon it. She seemed quite surprised to find so nice and soft a seat in Elvie's camp, and said it was as good as a sofa.

Elvie then took out his match-box, and kindled the fire—the wood for which, of course, had been already laid beforehand. The fire soon blazed up quite high, and threw out a fine glow on every side, and especially into the camp where Fan was sitting, and made the place not only warm, but very cheerful and pleasant.

Elvie then went to the sled and brought the basket of provisions. Fan rose from her seat and commenced unpacking the apples, and doughnuts, and cakes, and turn-overs, and other provisions which her grandmamma had provided her with. The apples she put down upon a flat

stone before the fire which Elvie had placed there. The other things she laid on one side.

By the time that these arrangements had been made, August, who had in the mean time been helping Quimbo load the sled, came to see how they were getting on at the camp, and to give Elvie his second lesson. This second lesson, he said, was to be an explanation of the *third grade*, in the work of learning to write composition.

Elvie was all ready to receive the lesson. He took his seat by the side of Fan, saying:

"It will be only five minutes Fan, and the apples will be roasting all the time. Only you must not talk to interrupt us."

"No," said Fan. "I won't speak a word. But I suppose I can watch my apples."

"Oh yes," said August, "you can watch your apples, and if you think of anything special that you want to say, you can say it."

So August began his lesson-while Fan sat

with her hands folded before her, and her eyes intently fixed upon her apples. He explained that whereas in the first grade the scholars had simply to copy correctly the spelling and the punctuation which they had before them in the book from which they copied—so that they had nothing to do but to turn printed words into written words, and to see that the copy was made correctly—and in the second had the words which they were to write not visibly before them, but only ready in their memories, and so had to determine the spelling, the capitals, and the punctuation, for themselves—in the third, that is the one which he was now to explain, they had only the thoughts furnished them by the teacher. and they were obliged to put the thoughts into words themselves.

"And now," he continued, speaking to Elvie,
"I am going to give you a lesson of the third
grade for your next writing half-hour. I am

going to show you a picture and give you some thoughts about it, in such a way that you will not be able to remember exactly the words that I use, but only the thoughts; and so you will have to put them into words yourself when the time comes."

So saying August opened his pocket-book, and took from it a very peculiar-looking picture, a copy of which is shown in the engraving.

"This is a curious picture," said August, "as you see. It is of the kind called a silhouette. That is the first thing that I give you to say about it—namely, that it is a silhouette. A silhouette is a picture formed of plain black figures on a white ground. That is the second thought. If you forget what a silhouette is however you can look the word out in a dictionary: only to do that you must remember how the word is spelled."

So August spelled the word distinctly, syllable by syllable, and let Elvie spell it after him.



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"We will take you into the class too, Fan," said August, "only silhouette is too hard a word for you to spell. But you can spell the words boy and dog, and they are both in the picture."

August then gave those words to Fan, one after the other, to spell, and she spelled them and seemed much pleased to think that she was taken into the class.

"Remember," said August, "that a silhouette is a picture formed of figures uniform black, upon a white ground."

"Yes," said Fan looking at the picture.

"The ground is white. It looks as if there was snow upon it."

"Ah, but the word ground in speaking of such a picture as this," said August, "does not mean the earth that the boy and the dog are standing upon, but all the rest of the paper except what is taken up by the figures. But you need not put that into your composition,

Elvie, unless you choose. I will give you two more thoughts to put in, besides describing what a silhouette is. One is you can state that there is a boy and a dog in the picture, and a ball upon the ground. The other is that the boy has a whip in his hand, but that the dog does not seem to be afraid that the boy is going to whip him."

"No," said Fan, "he does not seem a bit afraid."

"And that is the end of your second five minutes' lesson," said August. "So now, Fan, you can attend to the roasting of your apples."

So August went away and left Elvie and Fan to attend to their own affairs at the camp, while he assisted Quimbo in completing the load. Fan was so much pleased with having been recognized as a member of the class, that she spelled boy and dog several times, in the intervals of her other occupations. Elvie himself was reminded by her

assiduity to take measures for not forgetting the mode of spelling silhouette, and for this purpose he procured a short stick, and using the end of it as the ancients were accustomed to employ their pointed iron *styles*, in writing upon tablets of wax, he wrote the word on the smooth surface of the snow by the side of the hut.

This was an excellent plan—for what we write we impress upon our memories by the very act of writing it, which is in addition to the benefit we derive from having the writing itself to refer to afterwards to refresh our recollection. availed himself of both these advantages in the case of the word written upon the snow. For more than once, as he passed by the place in going in and out of his camp, he paused an instant to repeat the spelling of the word to himself, and then afterward, when on the next Monday the time came in his writing hour for him to write his composition on that subject, he had no difficulty in spelling the words. For by shutting his eyes, or even without shutting them, by looking dreamily into space for a moment, he could re-awaken in his mind an image of the writing on the snow, with all the letters composing it, each in its proper place.

"I verily believe," said he, "that I should have forgotten how that word was spelled, if I had not written it so plainly on the snow."

This is indeed one of the chief advantages of taking notes of one's reading, or keeping a journal in which to record important facts. The very act of writing has the effect of impressing the fact upon the memory, as well as of recording it upon the paper.

Elvie and August amused themselves so well at their camp-fire that when the sled was loaded, and it was time for Quimbo to go with it to the house, they concluded not to go with him, but to wait till the next time; for this would give them an hour or two longer at their camp-fire. When Quimbo had gone, August went to help Timothy cut and prepare some wood, while Elvie was occupied from time to time, in preparing more fuel for the fire, by means of a small sized axe that belonged to him and which he always brought with him when he came to the woods—and in hauling the wood so prepared to his camp.

In the course of Quimbo's absence with the sled August came to the camp to give the children their third five minutes' lesson. This lesson consisted of an account of the manner in which such children as they could make silhouette pictures. These directions were substantially as follows:

"The first thing is," he said, "to procure some sheets of black paper—that is paper that is black on one side. I don't know how you will manage to procure such paper. They may not have any in the paper store in Granville."

"I know," said Elvie. "I can write to my father, and he can send me some from New York. He can fold it large, and put it into one of his big envelopes."

"That will be an excellent way," said August And August then went on to explain that a sheet of the black paper, when procured, must be spread out upon a board in the shop, the black side down, and tacked here and there at the edges with carpet-tacks, to prevent its curling up in drying; and then that it must be gummed all over with a thin coat of gum or mucilage, like a sheet of postage stamps. Then when it was dry the figures were to be cut out of it, and finally the figures were to be gummed upon pieces of white paper, which would form the "ground."

Another way was to cut out the figures first and then gum them afterward. The outlines of the figures, he said, could be drawn upon the white side of the paper, or could be traced upon it from any other picture, and then when the figures were cut out, they could be gummed afterwards; only in gumming them they must be laid upon a smooth piece of waste paper of some kind, to prevent gumming the table.

Then, moreover, in all cases after pictures are gummed and placed as they are to go upon the white paper, the whole must be put somewhere under pressure, to keep them smooth and flat while they are drying.

When August had finished these explanations he said that that was the third lesson. The children were surprised to hear that such talk as this was to be considered as a lesson; but August said that anything was a lesson that gave them useful instruction.

At length the time arrived for them all to return home to dinner. The ox-sled had come back and had received its second load, and so

August prepared the hand-sled for Fan. Elvie, who at first had proposed to ride home on the hand-sled with Fan, finally concluded that it would be more romantic, or, as he expressed it, "better fun," to ride on the top of the load of wood. So August arranged some of the top sticks on a level, with the smooth sides uppermost, and then spread one of the buffalo robes upon it, and so made quite a comfortable seat.

Then, by means of some hay and the other buffalo robe, he made a good seat for Fan upon the hand-sled, and when he had placed her upon it he took the short boards which he had provided and placed them behind her back and against the stakes, for her to lean against and to prevent her falling out behind.

In this way the whole party returned to the house. The wind had now gone down, and the sun was shining bright and warm, so Elvie and Fan had not only a very pleasant but a very comfortable ride home.

That very afternoon Elvie wrote to his father, requesting him to send some sheets of black paper suitable for cutting silhouettes. He received the paper early the following week, in an envelope so large that the postmaster supposed it must contain very important documents, and wondered what they could be.

From these sheets Elvie and Fan cut out a great many silhouettes, and pasted them upon small sheets of white paper, which thus formed the back-ground of the figure. Fan's picture, it must be confessed, had not at first much meaning. They consisted of little squares and diamonds and three-cornered figures, and other odd shapes of various kinds. It amused her to cut out these things and gum them upon white paper, and then to look at them and observe the effect. Elvie took more pains with his work, and for patterns made tracings of simple figures of children and animals, the models for which

he obtained from pictorial newspapers and books. August, observing that he took pains to draw and cut them accurately, made him a small book to gum them into—one on each page—and in the end Elvie formed in this book quite a curious collection.

Elvie also wrote a composition on the subject of the silhouette which August had shewn him. This was a composition of the third grade, as classed at the Academy—that is one in which the *thoughts*, but not the words nor the modes of spelling and writing them, were furnished the pupil. His composition was as follows:

"THE SILHOUETTE.

"A silhouette is made of figures cut out of black paper and gummed upon white—only in this one the black is printed on the same paper.

"There is a boy and a dog and a ball on the ground, and the boy has got a whip.

"But the dog is not afraid that he is going to

be whipped, I suppose because he knows he has not done anything wrong."

"I thought I would put that in," said Elvie, looking up from his paper when he had finished reading his composition, "though you did not tell us that."

"It was an excellent plan to put it in," said August. "You not only expressed the thoughts I gave you, but you put in a new one of your own. That shows that you are nearly advanced enough to be promoted into the next grade."

"How are the boys promoted at the Academy?" asked Elvie.

"They promote themselves pretty much," said August. "That is if they write carefully and correctly in one grade, and feel as if they would like to try the next, the teacher promotes them and lets them try. On the other hand, if any boy who is in the higher grade—where the teacher gives the class a subject and they have

to furnish their own thoughts—complains that he can't think of anything to say, the teacher says, 'It is my fault, I have put you forward into too high a grade. If you would like it I can let you go back into the next lower grade, where I tell you what to say, and all you have to do is to find words to say it.'"

Elvie paused and appeared to be reflecting upon this plan. It seemed to him that he would not like to be put back very well.

"And yet," said he, "they might really not be able to think of anything to say."

"No," said August, "that is almost impossible. No matter what the subject is, if you know what the word means, you must have some ideas about it. That is to say, the very hearing of the word must awaken some thoughts in your mind; and all you have to do is to write some one of those thoughts, whatever they are. It is not of much consequence what the thought is.

You learn the art of putting thoughts into words, and expressing them in writing, as well by one as by another. For instance, in the class where the boy said he did not know what to write, the subject which the teacher had given out was GARDEN."

"Well," said Elvie, after thinking a moment,
"I should not know what to say about 'gardens.'"

"And yet you have thoughts enough if you would only look into your mind for them. Think a moment. Does not the word garden awaken any idea whatever in your mind?"

"Only that it is a place where flowers grow," said Elvie.

"Well," said August, "that is an idea. Write that. You will learn as much by expressing that correctly and well, on paper, as you would by any other; and you could not well have a better sentence to begin your composition with. And by the time you have that written, another will come into your mind, and so on."

August was perfectly right in this reasoning. There is no subject whatever that can be assigned for a composition in school which does not suggest some thought or other to every member of the class, if he would only look into his mind and see what the thought is; and if he would sit down at once and write that, the difficulty would all be over. The trouble is never want of thoughts in the mind, but want of a channel of communication open between the mind and the I advise, therefore, all the readers of this pen. book—whether old or young—whenever a subject for composition is assigned to them, to spend no time in dreading the writing, or in thinking they have nothing to say, but the very first time that they have five minutes to spare to take pen or pencil and write carefully and correctly the first thought that is suggested to their minds by the subject that has been given them. When they have written this first sentence, they will find that the difficulty is usually over. They can put the paper away and finish the work at any other time. They will find that when they have thus once begun, thoughts will come faster than they can write them; and as happens very often, indeed, in such cases, they will have more difficulty in determining where to stop than they did in finding out how to make a beginning.

After they have written the first copy—or the first draft, as it is generally called—in this way, they should then—usually at a third sitting—look it all over very carefully, and see if there are any improvements that can be made in the work, either in the arrangement of the different thoughts or in the modes of expression, and then make a new and fair copy of the whole. They who will pursue this method will generally

find that all their trouble about writing composition will have disappeared. And the most important of all the directions is to be satisfied with the mere writing of one sentence as a beginning for the first part of the work,—or rather with making a beginning at once even though you have only time to write one sentence. The relief to the mind of having the work begun, and one sentence written, is something wonderful in such cases, and makes all the remaining work comparatively easy.

I ought perhaps to say, before ending this chapter, that there is a kind of composition required of advanced pupils in higher schools and seminaries, which is not included in the series of grades described by August; and that is where a subject is assigned which the pupils are required to *investigate*—by seeking information in regard to it, in encyclopedies, and gazetteers, or other books of reference—and

then to arrange the facts, and present them in a systematic and connected form. The work of gathering information, and arranging it in a methodical form, and presenting it in a clear and lucid manner, requires a kind of skill which is to be acquired by a practicing somewhat more advanced than that which was provided for in the grades which August described; for these were arranged only with a view of teaching the children to express correctly in writing, such thoughts as would readily suggest themselves to their minds, or could be acquired without any special study.





CHAPTER XIX.

Frying Maple Sugar Cakes.

TLVIE went on during the succeeding month of the winter very prosperously with his studies, for two hours every morning, on the plan which August had arranged. When his reading half-hour came he usually went down to read his story aloud to "grandmamma," and this was a great help to him in learning to read distinctly and intelligibly. It is always a great help to boys or girls in learning to read well, to have some one to read to: for the desire to make the persons who listen to them understand the story, has a great influence in leading them to read as distinctly as possible, and so to modulate their voice in reading the dialogue parts as to convey the full force and import of what is said to the mind of the hearer. If a mother takes the opportunity when she is seated at some quiet work, of letting one or the other of her children read to her from some entertaining story, which she has expressly reserved for the purpose, on account of its being one specially adapted to amuse or interest the reader, the children almost always improve very rapidly, and sometimes become excellent readers at a very early age.

Sometimes this is done by older boys or girls who take an interest in the improvement of their younger brothers and sisters. But when the older ones don't care much about the improvement of the younger ones, they would rather read the books themselves.

Fan was generally at school during the forenoon, so that the house was usually very still during Elvie's study hours. Sometimes, however, she staid at home, especially when the great snow storms came, during the latter part of the month of February.

One of Elvie's half-hours, it will be remembered, was to be devoted to reading some book of useful instruction and taking notes or making memoranda of the things that interested him in what he read. These notes August used to look over afterward, and Elvie would explain to him what they meant. Sometimes Elvie would make these notes more than mere memoranda. He would write out a tolerably full and connected account of what he had read—and this formed for him quite a good exercise in composition and after August had looked it over and corrected the mistakes, if there were any, he would lay it aside till his writing half-hour came the next day, and then make a fair copy of it in a blank book which August had provided, and which had for its title, "The Book of Useful Knowledge." He would also often spend this fourth half-hour in writing something of his own—that is something original—and then in the writing half-hour copy what he had written, after it had been corrected, into his book.

One day in February a great snow storm began early in the morning. When school time came the ground and the old drifts were everywhere covered with the new snow, and the air was filled with the falling flakes which the wind was driving furiously through the air down the valley. Elvie went down with August to the Academy that day, and Fan was so anxious to go to school, too, that her grandmamma consented, on condition that Elvie would go down for her when the time came for the school to be done.

This Elvie was, of course, very ready to do. He found it somewhat difficult, however, for the drifts in the road had increased so much by that time 25*

that the snow in many places came up to the horse's knees.

The storm increased all that day, and August would have found it very difficult to get home if a farmer coming up the valley from the village had not given him a ride, which the farmer was very glad to do, for the sake of the help which he knew August would render him in trampling down the snow, and thus breaking out a roadway for the horse through such drifts as were too deep for it to go through without help, for though horse is much stronger than a man, he has not so much patience and steadiness of purpose in contending with new and unexpected difficulties. and the driver himself will often make a way through a drift of snow so deep and compact that the horse, were he to attempt it, would give up at once in despair.

But to return to the story. The next morning the snow had become so deep as to make

the roads entirely impassable to all ordinary vehicles, so that no one could go either up or down until they were broken out. This breaking out of the roads after such a storm—as probably most of the readers of this book are aware is usually performed in New England by the farmers turning out with all their ox teams and a very heavy sled, and going back and forth through the road so as to break the way sufficiently to allow a horse and sleigh to follow. When August rose on the morning after this storm he thought at first that it would not be possible for him to get to school; but fortunately, just as the time arrived when he usually set out, he saw the breaking-out team coming down the valley. It was a team consisting of ten pairs of oxen following each other in a long train, and drawing after them a heavy sled loaded with men and boys, most of whom were provided with shovels to use in digging a way through

such drifts as were too deep for the oxen to manage without help. So August seized his books, and wallowing out into the road, mounted upon the sled. He found two or three other Academy scholars there before him. These others lived farther up the valley, and had availed themselves of this mode of getting to school.

Elvie played with Fan a little while after this, until the usual time arrived for him to commence his studies, and then went to his room. He opened his stove doors and replenished his fire. and then commenced his work. Fan remained below stairs during this time, helping her grandmamma about her household work. When Elvie went down in his second half-hour to read a story to grandmother, Fan went in to hear it too, and when the story was completed, and Elvie was going back to his room to his work, Fan wanted to go with him. So as Elvie went up the stairs that led to his room, she began to follow.

"But, Fan," said he, "I am afraid to have you come now, for if you speak to me you will interrupt me. I am going to be very busy."

"What are you going to do?" asked Fan.

"I am going to write my autobiography," said Elvie.

"What's that?" asked Fan.

It is not at all surprising that Fan did not understand the meaning of so hard a word as autobiography. The reader will, however, perhaps recollect that the book which Elvie's father had selected for useful reading was the Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin, that is to say the life of Benjamin Franklin, written by himself—the word autobiography meaning one's life written by oneself. Franklin began life as a printer's boy in Boston, and as he begins his autobiography with a very interesting account of the incidents of his boyhood, and goes on with a narration of the various adventures which

befell him as he grew up to be a man, and of the excellent ways which he adopted in early life that led to the great success and to the distinguished honors that he afterwards attained, the book is a very entertaining one to all young people, as well as a very useful one for them to read for the purpose of instruction. The fact that it possessed this double character, that is of its being both entertaining and instructive, was the reason, I suppose, why Elvie's father selected it, and I think he made an excellent choice.

Elvie became very much interested in the book as he went on with it, in the course of the winter—so much so that he would have liked very well to have gone on with the reading of it out of his school hours. But this was against the rule. He was to reserve it strictly as a book to be *studied*,—that is to be read slowly and attentively, and with the making of notes and memoranda of the important points brought to

view in each reading, so that he might be afterwards examined by means of them upon each lesson.

One day, not long before the storm already mentioned, August finding that Elvie was much interested in Franklin's autobiography, told him that he thought it would be a good plan for him to write his own autobiography. "Oh, August!" he exclaimed with surprise. "I should not know how to do it. I should not know how to begin."

"I'll tell you how to begin," said August.

"Get your paper and pen ready and you can begin now. When you have once begun the trouble will be over,—as it is generally with compositions of any kind."

So Elvie took out a sheet of paper and a pen and then said—

"Ready!"

"What is the first thing that you can remember?" asked August.

"The first thing that I can remember," repeated Elvie, assuming at the same time a
musing attitude and air, "I believe the first
thing is my chasing a butterfly one day when I
was taking a walk with my mother by the
river."

"Well," said August, "write that." So Elvie began to write.

After he had had time to write two or three words, August asked him how far he had got.

"The first thing that I can remember," said Elvie reading from his paper. "Very well," said August, "stop there. You have made your beginning. Now put your paper away and when the right time comes to-morrow go on and finish the account of all that you can remember about the butterfly, and by that time you will think of something else to write."

It was in anticipation of this duty that Elvie preferred to go to his room alone, after he had finished reading the story to Fan and to her grandmother.

But Fan was very desirous of going with him.

"I won't speak to you at all," said she, "while you are writing your—your—thing.

"And besides," she added, as she walked along up the stairs behind Elvie, trying hard to keep up with him, "if you will let me stay with you I will fry you a maple sugar cake."

"A what?" asked Elvie. He was as much puzzled to imagine what a fried maple sugar cake could be, as Fan had been by the word autobiography.

"A maple sugar cake," repeated Fan.

"What is a maple sugar cake?" asked Elvie.

"It is something very nice, very nice indeed!" said Fan.

By this time the two children had arrived at the door of Elvie's room, and they both entered. Elvie went to his seat at the table, took out his

writing materials, and the sheet of paper on which he had written the first few words of his autobiography, and also placed the sand-glass before him on its side. Fan went and stood by the stove.

"Now, Fan," said Elvie, "when I am ready to begin to write, I shall turn up the sand-glass, nd set the sand to running. After that you must not speak to me unless it is something very necessary, and then before you begin to speak you must come and turn down the sand-glass upon its side, so as to stop the sand. You see I must not talk at all, or do anything else but attend to my studies while the sand is running."

So Elvie turned up the glass and began his work. In a few minutes Fan came and stood for a moment at his side, looking anxiously at the sand-glass. Elvie perceived that she wished to speak to him but hardly dared to take the liberty of touching the glass.

So he turned down the glass himself and said:
"Well, Fan, did you have something very
necessary to say to me?"

"Only," replied Fan, "that I am going down now to get ready to fry the cakes."

"All right," said Elvie. And so saying, he turned the sand-glass again, and resumed his writing, while Fan went away out of the room.

The room was very quiet now for about five or ten minutes, and Elvie went on with his writing without any interruption. At the end of that time, however, a thumping noise was heard in the entry, which gradually drew nearer and nearer to the door, until at length Fan's voice was heard calling out, "Open the door! Open the door!"

Elvie turned down his sand-glass, and went to the door. He found Fan there, with a small table, which she was lugging along with great difficulty. It was a table which had been formed of a light stand, by sawing off the legs so as to make it of the right height for Fan and her doll.

"Why, Fan!" exclaimed Elvie, "what are you doing?"

"This is the table," said Fan. "We must have a table to eat our cakes upon when they are fried."

But Elvie, after a moment's reflection, proposed to Fan that she should set her table, and fry her cakes down by the kitchen fire, which he said would be much more convenient.

"And then," said he, "when everything is ready you shall come and call me, and I will come down. That's the way the farmers' wives do. They stay at home and get the supper ready, while the men stay out in the fields at their work, and come home when the supper is ready. They blow the horn to let them know the supper is ready. Stop a minute. I'll get you a horn."

So Elvie brought out from among his playthings a little trumpet, which he said Fan might have for a horn—to blow at the foot of the stairs when the supper was ready.

The idea of blowing the horn when supper was ready seemed to reconcile Fan to the plan of going back to the kitchen, and Elvie carried the table down for her and left her to her work.

The maple sugar cakes which Fan referred to were those small round flat cakes into which maple sugar is often formed, and which are sold in large towns for one or two cents a piece, and what she called "frying them" consisted in moistening them with water by pouring about a tablespoonful of water over each one, after they had been put into her little frying pan, one at a time, and then frying them over or near the fire until they were heated or softened through so that they could easily be cut with a knife. They could then be cut in thin slices, which could be

laid smoothly over pieces of bread and butter, forming a condiment which all children thought, when they tasted it, was very nice indeed. Preparing the maple sugar in this way she called "frying a maple sugar cake."

It took Fan so long to make all her preparations, and she stopped so often to play, and to go and talk with her grandmother about what she was doing, that a great deal of time passed before her supper, as she called it, was ready. Indeed, it was eleven o'clock, and Elvie had reached the end of his study hours, before he heard the horn at the foot of the stairs summoning him to go down.

When he entered the kitchen he found Fan's little table set in the corner by the side of the fire, and everything ready. There was a pitcher of milk and some tumblers, and also a plate with four small slices of freshly-baked bread, nicely spread with butter, upon the table. In another

smaller plate were two of the fried maple sugar cakes, both soft and hot, and of such consistency as to be very easily cut into thin slices to be spread upon the bread and butter.

Elvie and Fan sat down upon two little stools, one on each side of the table, and ate their luncheon together in a very merry manner. Elvie thought the fried cakes were excellent, and he enjoyed the repast all the more from his having had the patience and perseverence to go on and finish his studies within the time appointed, instead of coming down before he had finished them—as he had been somewhat tempted to do—to see how Fan was going to work to fry her maple sugar cakes.





CHAPTER XX.

Fan's Composition.

Elvie had another book in which he used to write in his writing half-hour, which he called his Magazine. The title in full was "The Entertaining Magazine," and this title August wrote for him in a full round hand upon the title page. In this book Elvie used to copy anecdotes, riddles, puzzles, short stories, and such compositions of his own as were of an amusing or entertaining character. Those which consisted of articles of any kind conveying valuable information he put in his Book of Useful Knowledge.

August often gave Elvie a picture as a subject

for a composition, and Elvie found that with the picture, as with any other kind of subject, the difficulty was almost always wholly at an end as soon as he began to write; for if he wrote one single sentence—or even a very few words—so as to make a beginning, what he thus wrote would always bring more to his mind. So that when a picture or any other subject was assigned him, he always found that if he only had the resolution to take out his paper and his pen and write down the first thought that the picture or the subject suggested, the work afterwards was all easy.

One day, for example, August gave him the picture shewn in the adjoining engraving as a subject.

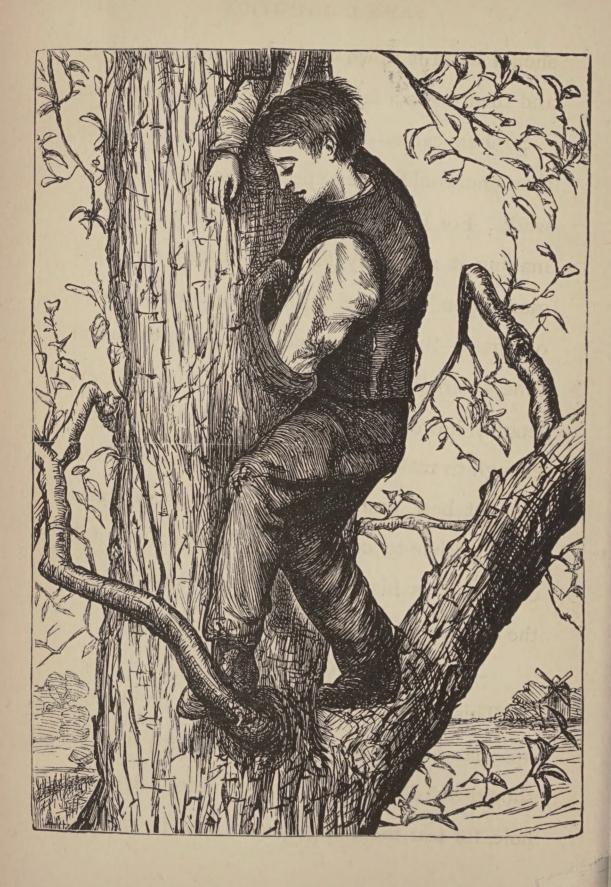
Fan, seeing the picture lying upon Elvie's table, asked him to give it to her. But he said he could not give it to her, for it was the subject of his composition. He was going to write a composition upon it, he said.

- "But you will spoil the picture," said Fan, "if you write on it."
 - "I mean about it," said Elvie.
 - "How do you do it?" asked Fan.
- "Why we look at the picture," replied Elvie, "and then write what we think about it. You could write a composition if you had a mind to."
 - "Oh no!" said Fan.
- "I mean all but the writing part," said Elvie.

 "You could look at the picture and tell me what you think: and then I could write it for you,—
 and afterward copy it into my magazine."

Fan had often heard Elvie read to her amusing stories from his magazine, and the idea of having something of hers put into the book seemed very attractive to her. So it was agreed that when the proper half-hour came in the course of Elvie's studies, Fan should come to his room and dictate to him whatever the view of the picture suggested to her mind; and that he

something of hers put into the



should write it down and afterwards correct it, and then make a fair copy of it in the magazine.

So Fan came—but it took her much longer than one would have expected to accomplish the work. For Fan stopped so frequently to talk, making it necessary for Elvie to turn down his glass upon one side, until she was ready to go on again—that a good deal more than the usual time was required for the sand to run out. At length, however, Fan had dictated sentences enough to make as long a composition as Elvie thought best, and then she went down stairs, leaving Elvie to correct it, and to make a fair copy of it in his book. When thus completed, the composition was as follows:

FAN'S COMPOSITION.

"This boy is up in a tree. I think he climbed up. He has got his hand into a deep hole. I should not dare to put my hand into such a deep hole, for fear there might be a bear in there to

bite me. Or if the hole is not big enough for a bear, then a snake, or a toad, or something.

"I don't see how the boy is going to get down again. He has tored the knees of his trowsers—or at least one of them—in climbing up. I wonder what his mother will say."

In correcting this composition before copying it into the Magazine, Elvie was for some minutes at a loss whether he ought to correct the word "tored" used by Fan instead of torn, which was the form of the word which she ought to have employed. He finally concluded that as it was the composition of a child, and was so stated in the book, it would be better to write it just as she dictated it, and so he let the incorrect word stand.

When Fan afterward saw her composition in the book, with the picture at the head of it, and heard Elvie read it to her, she was very much pleased, and said she wished he would let her write a composition every day.

Elvie went on during the succeeding weeks of the winter studying regularly his two hours every day, or rather practicing—for his work consisted principally not in learning to do new things, but only in acquiring, by practice, the power of doing with facility—that is readily and easily—what he already knew how to do. In this way he acquired a considerable degree of skill in writing, and formed a very good hand; for the principal thing that is necessary for the formation of a good hand is to write a good deal without ever writing so fast as to hurry at all the formation of any of the letters.

He also made great improvement in the readiness and certainty with which he could add numbers, and almost entirely cured himself of the extremely bad habit of counting, a habit which has greater influence than almost anything else in impeding the progress of the pupil in all subsequent operations in Arithmetic.

There were many great snow storms in Granville Valley in the course of the months of February and March, and the breaking out teams had to come down the valley many times. On such days Fan could not go to school, and whenever she was kept at home, from this or any other cause, she spent half of Elvie's study hoursthat is two of his half-hours—with him. The first was the time of his reading—for she always liked to hear the story which he read, especially as he usually read it in her grandmother's room where she could sit in her little chair, and, with her grandmother, form the audience.

It was a great advantage to Elvie to have somebody listening to him when he was reading for practice in this way, as it kept him all the time interested in reading in a very plain and distinct voice, and in so modulating the tones in which he read as to convey to his hearers the full force and meaning of the story. If any of

the boys and girls who read this book desire to learn to read well, I advise them to find somebody to read aloud to, as often as they can. So great indeed is the influence of the thought that some one is listening to you when we are reading-or rather the idea that you are reading to somebody whom you wish to make understand the story, instead of merely reading to yourselfthat when you have no real auditor it will affect very considerably your mode of reading, and conduce to your improvement if you imagine one. In other words when you read alone it is a good plan to read aloud, and to imagine that there is a person in the room who is listening to you, and to try to read in such a manner as to convey to the mind of this fancied listener the full force and beauty of the story.





CHAPTER XXI.

Two Silly Fellows.

THE snow from all the different storms which fell during the months of January, February, and the early part of March, covered the ground at last to the depth of four or five feet "in the woods." The farmers, when speaking of the depth of the snow, generally refer to it as it lies in the woods, for there it lies level. In roads and fields, and in all the open ground where the wind has free play, it becomes much drifted, and it is not easy to ascertain the average depth. But in the woods, where the ground is sheltered by the trees, the snow falls evenly upon it, and the depth there is consequently a just criterion of the quantity which has fallen.

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As the spring advances, and the sun rises higher and higher in the heavens, and the days grow longer, the snow is softened, and settling together becomes consolidated, and then during the cold nights it freezes and becomes very hard, so that persons can walk upon it everywhere, over brooks, ponds, swamps, fences, and all the other obstructions which impede the way in excursions over the country in the summer. But then such walks must be taken early in the morning, for after the sun comes up the snow that had become hardened in the night is warmed and softened again, and then any body attempting to walk upon it—even small children -sink into it.

One Saturday morning when there was no school either for August or Fan, Elvie rose early and, finding that the snow was hard enough to bear him all around the house, proposed to August that they should go off on an expedi-

tion immediately after breakfast. August readily agreed to this proposal, and then the two boys concluded to fit up the hand-sled so as to make it a comfortable conveyance for Fan, and take her with them.

"We can draw her on the sled," said Elvie, while we walk along on the snow."

"But I shall want to run along upon the snow too," said Fan.

"Very well," said Elvie, "you shall run along upon the snow as long as you like, and when you get tired you shall ride on the sled."

So August and Elvie placed a back board upon the sled, against the stakes at the end, for Fan to lean against, and putting a small stool before it, they covered the stool and the back and the floor of the sled with a buffalo robe, so as to make a very convenient and comfortable seat. They made everything ready in this way before breakfast—which was at this time before

seven o'clock—so that they might set out immediately after breakfast, for they knew very well that as the snow would begin to thaw and soften by nine or ten they must set out early, so as to get back in season. For it is a fearful thing to get caught in such cases far away from home when the snow has begun to soften so that you sink down deep into it at every step.

When all was ready they set out, and as there were no fences or wet places or ploughed ground, or fields of growing grain, or obstacles of any other kind in their way—everything being covered up deep with snow—they could choose their course and go straight over ground which would have been utterly impracticable for them in the summer. August and Elvie generally walked straight along, but Fan ran to and fro, on this side and on that, wherever she found anything to attract her attention. She was very much interested in observing that every little

sprig or leaf which she saw on the snow lay at the bottom of a deep depression in it, and wondered how each one found a hole to lie in just big enough for it. The truth was that these various objects made the holes for themselves, or rather helped the sun to make them. For anything dark lying upon the snow, by absorbing the rays that fall upon them, and so becoming warmed, and melting the snow beneath them. gradually form a cavity for them to sink into; while the rays which fall upon the snow in other places are mostly reflected from the bright surfaces of the minute icy needles, as light and heat are from glass, thus causing the general surface of the snow to melt very slowly.

At one time Fan found a bird's nest in what seemed to be a little evergreen bush not higher than her knee. She was very much surprised, she said, to find a bird's nest on such a little tree; but the truth was that what she thought was a

bush was really the top of a pretty tall tree, higher than a man's head, though all the lower part of it was covered by the snow, which was here considerably drifted.

They went on in this way until they came to a dell where there was a rapid stream, which in summer was seen in some places tumbling over rocks, and in others rippling along shallow channels, forming what was called the Cascade. There was a little pathway in summer which led along the banks of the stream, crossing it here and there by means of large flat-topped stones which served the purpose of stepping stones; but now the banks, the stepping stones, and the stream itself—all, except at certain places where there were little falls of water a foot or two in height, in which cases the flow was so rapid that the water could not entirely freeze-were all covered and hidden by the ice and snow. And even these falls were usually bordered, and half enclosed by masses of icicles of the most brilliant and varied forms.

After rambling about the cascade, or rather the place where the cascade was in summer, though seeing nothing of it now except here and there a mass of icicles behind which the water was gurgling, or a deep depression in the snow, at the bottom of which they could see the water rippling along over the sand, the party at length set out on their return.

"Now," said Fan, "I should like to ride. I'm tired of walking."

So August and Elvie, after arranging the seat, placed Fan upon it, and then, after wrapping the end of the buffalo robe well around her shoulders and her feet, and tucking it in securely, August and Elvie took hold of the cross-piece at the end of the tongue, one on each side, and set out on the return journey.

"And now," said Elvie to August, "as we are going back tell me a story."

"Very well," replied August, "I'll tell you a story of two silly fellows."

"Good!" said Elvie, "that's just what I should like to hear."

Elvie, like most of other children, was always glad to hear about the silly doings of other people, though he was sometimes a little sensitive about having his own follies much exposed.

So August began as follows:

"THE STORY OF TWO SILLY FELLOWS.

"The first silly fellow," said August, beginning his story, "was silly enough, but he was not quite so silly as the second. The name of the first one was Joe Dodge."

"Was he a man or a boy?" asked Elvie.

"He was a man," said August, "though not a very old one. He thought he was very cunning and sly, and used to say it would take a very smart man to get the better of him. One day he went to the bank to borrow some money.

The bank directors decided that it was not best to lend him any, because he did not keep his promises well about paying. He went away in a great rage, and determined that he would do the bank all the damage that he could by burning all the bills of theirs that he could get hold of.

"So he looked over his money and every bill of that kind that he found he took out, and tore them in pieces and stamped upon them, and then threw the pieces into the fire."

"What! his own money?" exclaimed Elvie. Elvie knew enough about banking to be aware that a bank bill is nothing more than a promise to pay, on the part of the president and directors; and that destroying their bills was only releasing them from their promise.

"Why, what a fool!" said Elvie.

"And every time that anybody had any money to pay him," continued August, "he would try to get them to give him bills of that bank, so that he could destroy them. 'It was to spite the bank,' he said. The bills were the only things of theirs that he could get hold of."

"What a fool!" exclaimed Elvie again.

"Yes," said August, "but the other one I am going to tell you of is a bigger fool than he was."

"I can't imagine how anybody could be a bigger fool," said Elvie.

"You'll see," said August. "But I don't mean bigger in size, for the second fool is a boy at the Academy. I mean greater in folly."

"He is a boy," continued August, "who is in the assistant's department. The assistant's name is Miss Sanford.

"And what is the boy's name?" asked Elvie.

"His name is Shurke," said August. "William Shurke. They commonly call him Bill Shurke. Now his father, who knew that people who were educated could get their living more easily, and also get a better living, than people who were

not—for they could be clerks, or merchants, or teachers, or agents, whereas without any education they could only labour with their hands in sawing wood or digging ground, or doing other such things that did not require any knowledge —took a great deal of pains to earn money enough to send his boy to the Academy in order that he might be taught. But Bill did all he could to avoid being taught. When Miss Sanford gave out 'sums' to do, in his class, and explained to the boys how to do them, he would not pay any attention, but when the one who sat next to him was doing his sums he would look over him, and copy the figures on his own slate, and then carry them in as his own work. At last Miss Sanford found this out, for whenever she asked him any questions in regard to his work he could not tell anything about it, but soon became embarrassed and confused. So when she found out how it was, she told him

that he ought not to do so. He ought to try to understand the explanation, she said, so as to do the work himself.

"This made Bill Shurke angry, and he determined to do something to spite the teacher, he said. So one day after school was done, he tore out the leaves from some old writing books, and crumpled them up, and wrapped them in an old newspaper, so as to make an oblong sort of a wad. Then he got another boy to help him, and they climbed in at the window, and pulled forward the stove, and stuffed the wad of paper into the throat of the chimney, so that the flue could not draw. Then they put the stove back again in its place, and Bill and the other boy got out of the window the same way that they got in.

"So the next morning, when the man began to make the fire, he found that the smoke all came out into the room. He thought it was because the fire was not hot enough, and so he put in more wood. But this only made the matter worse; and at last, after they had had a great deal of trouble, and could not find out what the matter was, they had to dismiss the school and send for a mason to take out the stove. When the boys went out, Bill Shurke was seen capering about, and boasting that he had paid off Miss Sanford well. 'She can't have any school to-day,' said he. 'She can't have any school!'

"Miss Sanford had a good deal to do for herself that day—letters to write, and sewing—and though she was sorry to have the boys lose one day's progress in acquiring knowledge, yet so far as she herself was concerned, it was a great convenience to her to be released from school. All that Bill Shurke accomplished by his trick was to make it harder for him to get a good living when he became a man."

August paused after finishing his story, leav-

ing Elvie to think about it. In a few minutes Elvie said,

"I think he was something of a fool, but I don't think he was so big a fool as the man who burnt up that money."

"Why yes," said August, "for the man only lost the money for the time being, and that was the end of it. But Bill, in trying to spite the leacher, while he really did not do her any harm, was injuring himself for all his days,—or at least doing all he could to injure himself and the other boys."

"And then besides if he got found out he would be punished," said Elvie.

"He was found out," replied August, "but he was not punished."

"At least Miss Sanford turned him out of school," said Elvie.

"No," replied August. "I heard she said that the difficulty with him was that he did not 28*

understand what he was doing. He might be a great dunce for not knowing that he was only injuring himself and the other boys by hindering their progress in study, but she should as soon think of sending a man away from a hospital because he was very sick, as turning a boy out of school because he was a great dunce. Those are the boys, she said, that are most in need of instruction, and she should now pay special attention to Bill Shurke, and take a great deal of pains to teach him, so that in time he might get more sense."

Just as August arrived at this point in the conversation, the party came to a place where the ground, and of course the snow upon it, sloped toward the south, not far from the road, and suddenly August's right foot went down through the upper surface, which had been softened by the sun, and he sank up to his thigh. He drew his leg out again, and walked along by

himself, stepping very carefully till he reached the road, leaving Elvie to follow and to draw the sled alone, which he could easily do. Fortunately they were not now far from home, and for the rest of the way they went by the road.





CHAPTER XXII.

Conclusion.

away very pleasantly for Elvie in Granville Valley, and when the month of March opened, and the days began to grow longer and the sun rose higher in the heavens, the signs of approaching spring began to appear—while yet the ground was covered deep with snow. Two or three times also in the course of the month great snow storms arose which brought fresh supplies of this wintry covering, and made Elvie think that the time for ploughing the land and making the gardens in such a climate would never come.

Once or twice, however, there came what the people called a thaw,—that is a period of two or three days of very mild weather, in the course of which there was usually, for one or more days, a warm rain. At such times the brooks and streams would rise and overflow the snow under which they had been buried, and sometimes would float away great patches of it, and all the hollows and depressions in the fields would be filled with little pools of water, which, when the cold came on again, would form patches of ice where Elvie and Fan could find sliding places innumerable. And as the snow in all the other places, where the water from the thaw did not collect and stand, had been first softened by the rain and then hardened by the frost, until it had become everywhere firm and consolidated, the children could run about upon it, and draw their sleds from one pond to another with perfect facility.

One of these thaws extended through the first part of a certain week, and it rained incessantly until Wednesday. On Wednesday night it cleared up, and on Thursday it became very cold. The wind blew a gale through the whole of Thursday, but at night the wind "went down with the sun," and the thermometer went down too, for August found on Friday morning that the mercury was below zero.

"Ah!" said he, as he looked at the scale.

"We shall have some skating to-morrow."

There was a moderate wind throughout the day, on Friday, but on Saturday morning it was calm and pleasant, and after breakfast August and Elvie took their skates, and after fitting up the sled for Fan, put her upon it, and set off to go down the wood road to the mill pond, to see what the state of the ice was there. To their great joy they found that the whole pond was one sheet of ice from shore to shore, and that

there were a great many boys upon it, skating. The boys had moreover built a fire, and were heaping more wood upon it when August and Elvie came in sight. They obtained the wood by gathering fragments of dead trees, and old dry branches from the shore.

The new comers went down upon the ice and spent some hours upon it very agreeably in skating and drawing Fan upon the sled. The fire made it very cheerful and pleasant for them. Not that it was cold, or that there was any need of the fire for the sake of its warmth, but it was very pleasant, after taking a grand sweep along the shores of the pond, or exploring some wooded dell, where an indentation of the shore, or a branch stream came in, forming a little harbor, to come back to the fire and to stop and rest there a few minutes, and make believe warm themselves, while looking on to see the other boys come in, bringing fresh masses of wood for fuel.

When the time arrived for going home to dinner, August and Elvie took off their skates and proceeded up the road toward the house drawing Fan after them on the sled. On the way they fell into conversation about their future plans. August said that his term at the Academy came to an end about the middle of April, and that then there would be a vacation of three weeks. Elvie said that that would be a good time for them to go home.

"Then," said he, "we should get back about the first of May—just about the time that the people here will begin to make their gardens."

"Do you suppose your father intends to send you here next summer too?" asked August.

"I hope he does," said Elvie. "For I want to see how it is here in summer, when the fields are green, and the roads are dry, and the brooks are running, and the gardens are in bloom. Wouldn't you like to come back again?"

"Yes," said August, "very much."

"Then I wish you would write a letter to my father," said Elvie, "and ask him to let us come back."

August did not reply to this proposition, but shook his head slowly and thoughtfully.

"Why not?" asked Elvie.

"Your father will want to see first how much you have improved," said August.

"He thinks I have improved very much in my writing," said Elvie, "for he said so in his last letter. And I know that I have improved very much in my adding. I don't have to count at all now. I think too he will like my Book of Useful Knowledge, and my Magazine."

"We shall see," said August. "And all is that if he should decide to have you come back here in May, so that I can have another term at the Academy, I shall be very glad indeed."

That very night Elvie wrote a letter to his

father, saying that there was to be a vacation in the Academy for three weeks, beginning in the middle of April, and proposing that he and August should go home then and spend the vacation, and so come back again about the end of the first week in May.

When Elvie had finished his letter that evening he looked out of the window, and to his surprise found that the sky was overcast, and that the wind was rising. In the night he heard a clicking against the windows, and on the following morning he found that a heavy snow was falling. In two days the ground was everywhere covered with snow again to the depth of more than a foot, and the roads were considerably obstructed by it. In the course of another fortnight, however, this new snow had been repeatedly softened by day and frozen again at night, until it became so combined and consolidated with the old snow that there was scarcely any line of demarcation between them, and in the morning Elvie and Fan could run about over the surface of it everywhere, as they had done before.

There came afterward a succession of storms and thaws alternating with each other,—falling snows one day, melting suns the next, and driving or gentle rains on those following. It was in fact a protracted warfare between winter and spring. But spring was securing continual reinforcements in the combat from the increasing power of the sun as it rose higher and higher every day. At length patches of bare ground began to appear here and there, and they increased in numbers and magnitude every week. The road became bare in many places, especially upon all the southern slopes of it, until at length Elvie had a striking proof of the approaching victory of spring in the appearance of a vehicle on wheels going by, instead of the runners which had held exclusive possession of the way for so long a time.

In a day or two Elvie received from his father an answer to the letter which he had written to him in regard to coming back in May, for a summer term in the country. It contained, however, no definite and positive reply to his request. The letter gave directions, however' that Elvie should inquire whether Deacon and Mrs. Justin could receive them for three months more, from about the first of May, in case he should wish to have them come, but in the mean time requested that the account should be paid in full for all Deacon Justin's charges up to the time of their leaving, and everything settled except in respect to the disposition of the furniture, which he would leave, he said, until he decided what to do about the return of the boys.

Mr. Grant expressed also the wish in his

letter that Deacon Justin would include in his list, not only what had been distinctly agreed upon beforehand, but also a full and satisfactory charge for all the extra trouble or expense that he had been put to in any way, during the residence of the boys in his family. He enclosed also a large check, drawn to August's order, for the payment of the bill.

When people are considerate and reasonable, difficulties are not very likely to occur between them, and August and Elvie met with very few in their intercourse with each other, during their residence in Granville Yalley. There was one case in which for a time August was quite at a loss what to do, and with a brief account of this case this volume will be brought to a close.

One day, after Elvie had finished his studies, and August was still at the Academy, Elvie, in rambling about among the neighbors to see some boys with whom he had formed acquaint-

ance, became extremely interested and excited at the sight of a "tame fox;" at least the owner so designated him, though he did not seem after all very tame, for he had an iron collar round his neck and was also kept chained. The boy, who was beginning to be a little tired of him, offered to sell him to Elvie for what Elvie considered a reasonable price, and so Elvie bought him with his pocket money, and brought him home, and put him in a box in the barn; and then when August came home, the first thing was to shew him the fox. August took great interest in looking at him, and seemed to sympathize to a remarkable extent with Elvie in the joy he felt in the possession of such a prize. Fan too, when she came to see the fox, was greatly excited with an emotion in which fear and pleasure were very mysteriously intermingled.

But on seriously reflecting upon the subject August felt some difficulty in determining what to do. For a time no doubt Fan would be too much afraid of the fox to run any risk of being bitten by him. But in time she might become more bold, and if she or Elvie should at any time get bitten, serious censequences might possibly ensue: for sometimes the bites of wild animals, he knew, have a poisoning effect upon the human system. Then he thought that Mrs. Justin might feel uneasy and anxious for fear that Fan might get bitten, and August did not know moreover but that the fox might break away from his fastening at some time, and kill some of the poultry or do other damage. So he concluded that this was a case in which, according to the arrangement made with Elvie's father, he was to buy back whatever Elvie should buy with his pocket money, that was likely to

be dangerous to himself, or dangerous or annoying to others. But then according to that
arrangement was to keep himself what he
should thus buy back, and take it with him to
New York, and deliver it to Elvie's father.

But how was he to keep this fox, and carry it with him to New York, and give it to Elvie's father? The very idea was absurd!

After considerable reflection and several conversations with Elvie on the subject—who, much to his credit, was willing that August should do what he thought best—it was decided that August should buy back the fox, refund to Elvie what he had paid for it, and then should recommit it to the charge of the boy who had owned it, to be kept safely by him as the property of Mr. Grant of New York, until it should be called for. The boy, when this plan was proposed to him, was very ready to accede

to it, for it seemed to him like being allowed to have back his fox, and keep the money for which he had sold him too. So the fox was taken back in a few days to his former quarters, and with it August took also the following form of receipt which he had prepared for the boy to sign:

"Received of August Rodman, for safe keeping, one fox, said to be tame, with collar and chain, to be delivered to the order of Mr. Grant of New York, on demand."

The boy on receiving the fox signed this receipt, and August put it away among his papers to be delivered to Mr. Grant on his arrival in New York. Mr. Grant on reading this receipt among the other documents which August and Elvie presented to him on their final report to him in New York, read it with a perfectly serious face, endorsed and filed it

regularly with the other papers, and told August that he could not possibly have disposed of the case in a more business-like and proper manner.

I believe however that the fox was never called for.



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